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Funerary vase, North Carolina
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Director's Note

From 1957 to 1980, the North Carolina Museum of Art published *Bulletin*, a scholarly publication that focused attention on the Museum's collection. Publication of *Bulletin* was interrupted in 1980, when the staff was consumed with the myriad urgent details involved in moving to the new building. Under former director E. Peters Bowron's leadership, not only was the collection moved, but also it was reexamined by the curators and by the conservators. This preliminary study illuminated the need for additional work on the collection, in terms of both scholarship and restoration. Some of the new information that came to light at the time was proudly presented on the walls of the new building in reattributions and didactic wall labels.

Since then, further study of the collection has been done by the Museum's curators as well as by outside authorities. The resulting scholarship deserves a forum that permits focused documentation of specific works. To reflect the chronology of our collection, this first issue is devoted to five classical works in the Museum. It is with pride that we present the scholarship of Diana E. E. Kleiner, Cornelius C. Vermeule, Diana Buitron-Oliver, and

J. R. Green, as well as that of Mary Ellen Soles, Curator of Ancient Art at the Museum. We plan to offer *Bulletin* on an annual basis to interested colleagues here and abroad, and we hope that this distribution will stimulate further writing about the Museum's collection from outside scholars.

I would like to express my thanks to Mary Ellen Soles, who served as the curatorial coordinator of this long-awaited issue of *Bulletin*; to Ann Waterfall, who serves as managing editor; and to Doug Clouse and Jennie Malcolm, who designed this handsome publication. The rebirth of *Bulletin* is made possible by grants from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation and the Newington-Cropsey Foundation. We are grateful for their generosity and are excited about reestablishing this vital link between the scholarly community and the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Richard S. Schneiderman



Fig. 1
Head of a bearded man, North
Carolina Museum of Art. Gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Hanes. G79.6.12

Cesnola's Legacy: An Example of the Greek Influence on Archaic Cypriot Sculpture

by Diana Buitron-Oliver

Situated at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, closer to Syria and Lebanon than to Greece, the island of Cyprus has been throughout its history a strategic stop on profitable trade routes and a crossroads for many people: Phoenician, Persian, Egyptian, Greek, Turkish, and British, to name only a few across the ages. Americans are known to have visited the island as early as the 1820s and 1830s, when courageous and dedicated missionaries made Cyprus the scene of their labors.

The most famous of all Americans to visit the island was the clever and audacious soldier of fortune of Italian birth, Luigi Palma di Cesnola. Cesnola fought for the Union in the American Civil War and was rewarded with the consulship of Cyprus, not in those days a diplomatic plum. But he found much to interest him on the island, and in the years between his appointment in 1865 and his departure in 1872, he acquired a lifelong passion for and became an acknowledged master of the antiquities trade.

In 1870 Cesnola claimed as his own the great discoveries at the site of Golgoi (Athienou), southeast of Nicosia. There, an army of local diggers had uncovered a row of seventy-two pedestals along the foundation line of one of the walls of a temple. A short distance away were the

limestone statues that had fallen from the pedestals, all sizes and types, some with Assyrian headdress, others Egyptian, others wearing wreaths of leaves in the Greek style. Cesnola remarked that the statues seemed to be grouped according to ethnic type, and that most of the heads had been broken from their bodies. Cesnola, who went on to become the first director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, wrote the description of these excavations sometime after they had occurred, and his writings are far from the careful excavation report one can hope for nowadays. Nevertheless, his narrative tells in a general way something about the purpose and function of Cypriot statues.¹

Another excavator, Cesnola's contemporary and fellow diplomat, R. Hamilton Lang, head of the British mission at Larnaca, described groupings of statues within a sanctuary setting at Idalion (Dhali), not far from Golgoi,² and it is clear that such statues, ranging in size from two feet tall to colossal, were offerings to deities. Hundreds of limestone and terracotta figures, many of them life-size, must have been offered in dedication, so many that it sometimes became necessary to clear out the old gifts to make room for the new. When this happened, the old votives were ceremoniously buried in pits (*bothroi*) and in the process of moving, many of the heads seem to have become detached from the bodies.

The beautifully preserved limestone head of a bearded man in the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh is one such head (figs. 1–5).³ We do not know who it represents, for the question of the identity of these votive figures remains unanswered. Were they meant to be images of gods, donors, or perhaps priests?

The head in Raleigh represents that of a mature man. Fifteen inches high, it must have been broken from a slightly over-life-size statue. It has suffered small abrasions above the eyes and in the center of the forehead, and the nose has been broken off, though traces of the nostrils remain.⁴

The man is wearing a wreath composed of large bay leaves above berries and ivy leaves. His hair is parted in the middle, with a short, wavy fringe over the forehead. Individual strands, marked by deep grooves, fall to the sides and back. On the sides are long, wavy locks, and at the back of the neck the hair seems to be gathered toward the center. The locks of hair that fall below the wreath are rendered in higher relief and greater detail than the hair on the crown of the head.

The man has a broad, low forehead that projects



Figs. 2–5
Head of a bearded man (and detail),
North Carolina Museum of Art.

somewhat in the profile view, giving the heavy-lidded eyes a deep-set look. The thin lips curve slightly under a long mustache, its texture suggested by long, deep grooves. Shallower grooves mark the hair growth on the upper lip and the short hairs forming a small triangle below the center of the lower lip. The locks of the beard are long and wavy, and curl a little at the ends. They are arranged in three tiers, the topmost tier of shorter, more tightly curled locks appearing only on the sides. The beard is deeply undercut to make it stand out from the neck, which is smooth and unbroken on the left side of the head but has been damaged on the right. Traces of red paint remain to indicate the eyebrows and the iris of the eyes.⁵ The use of red paint for eyebrows and iris on the Raleigh head is consistent with Greek practice and appears on other Cypriot heads of this type.⁶ The missing body was probably clothed in a Greek costume, a chiton (tunic) and himation (cloak), in harmony with the generally Hellenic character of the head. For an idea of what it might have looked like, one can compare the so-called Apollo from Idalion in the British Museum,



or one of the figures Cesnola found at Golgoi, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.⁷

The choice of limestone, which is a softer stone than marble, was dictated by the scarcity of marble on the island of Cyprus. No naturally occurring marble exists there, but it was imported to a few places, such as Marion (Polis), on the northwest coast, where influence from Greece was strong. Large-scale sculpture could also be made of terracotta. A number of life-size clay figures have been found in Cypriot sanctuaries, notably at Ayia Irini, on the north coast of the island.⁸

The style of carving, a heavy, almost summary, modeling of the facial features combined with simple linear surface patterns for hair and beard, reflects the late archaic and early classical style in Greece. Greek influence in Cyprus was present throughout the archaic period, when many Greeks settled on the island and flourishing kingdoms grew up at such places as Salamis, Marion, Paphos, and Kourion. Like other ethnic influences on sculpture, the Greek style is most evident in headdress and garments. Although Cypriot sculpture also exhibits the archaic





Figs. 6-7

Head of a bearded man, The Cyprus Museum, Nicosia. Found near Troulli.

Greek love of linear surface patterns and the animating device of the archaic smile, in Cypriot sculpture we see little of the intense focus of archaic Greek sculptors on the human body as a living, functioning organism. Even when the body is preserved, a Cypriot figure in Greek dress is merely a vehicle for the distinguishing clothing.

Comparison with Greek models that are dated fairly securely remains the best method of arriving at dates for Cypriot sculpture. This is true whether the trappings of dress are Greek, Persian, or Egyptian, for the dominant artistic influence on Cypriot sculpture seems to have been Greek—even though the spirit that impelled Greek art is missing. By the middle of the fifth century B.C., Cypriot sculpture shows some awareness of the early classical style, a style that is most completely expressed in the sculpture of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, dated to around 460 B.C. The facial expression of the Raleigh head, with its faint smile yet almost grave expression, suggests a date toward the middle of the fifth century B.C.

Figures in Greek dress have been found all over Cyprus, but particularly in the eastern part of the

island. The location where the head in Raleigh was found is not known, but it seems likely that it came from this region. The Raleigh head finds a good parallel in a head displayed in the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia, found in 1967 at Petres, near Troulli, north of the port city of Larnaca, in a small pit or *bothros* along with other fragments of other limestone sculptures (figs. 6-10).⁹

The Troulli head also represents a mature man wearing a wreath of bay leaves, and he too has broad, low eyebrows and heavy-lidded eyes. But there are differences as well: the hairline curves more at the forehead, the face is longer from eye to beard, and the cheekbones are more prominent. In addition, the beard is composed of more layers of shorter, curlier locks of hair, and the lips curve more strongly, in more of an archaic smile, which suggests a slightly earlier date.

Three other heads of similar type are in the Larnaca Archaeological Museum. One, probably from Arsos, not far from Troulli, provides the closest parallel for the wreath on the head in Raleigh, a wreath composed of bay leaves above large berries and ivy leaves.¹⁰ The two other male heads, one from Arsos,



Figs. 8–10
Head of a bearded man (and details),
The Cyprus Museum.

the other from Pergamos in the same district, are also close.¹¹ From the same general area are two of the best-known examples of the Greek type, the so-called Apollo from Idalion, now in the British Museum, and the figure from Golgoi in the Metropolitan Museum, both mentioned earlier as examples that preserve the body with its Greek garments.¹²

When Cesnola left Cyprus, he took with him most of the vast collection he had amassed and tried unsuccessfully to sell to various foreign museums including the Louvre, the British Museum, and the Hermitage in Leningrad. After long negotiations and with the help of his loyal New England friend Hiram Hitchcock, he finally sold the collection to the new Metropolitan Museum in New York, in 1872 only three years old, and was soon hired to catalogue and install his collection on their premises. In March 1873 the Cesnola collection opened to rave reviews, the sculptures touted as the missing link between Egypt and Greece, the great treasures from the mysterious East.¹³

Most Cypriot sculpture in the United States in collections other than the Metropolitan Museum can be traced back to Cesnola. Most are pieces sold by



Fig. 11
Head of a bearded man, Hood
Museum of Art, Dartmouth College,
Hanover, New Hampshire. Bequest of
Emily Howe Hitchcock. 12.I.324

him before the great sale to the Metropolitan or are items sold as superfluous by the Metropolitan in 1928. One example is a wreathed head now in the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, the bequest of the family of Cesnola's great friend, Hiram Hitchcock (fig. 11). Besides the collection at the Metropolitan, other collections of Cypriot sculpture in the United States are in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the John and Mabel Ringling Museum in Sarasota, Florida. Major collections of Cypriot sculpture are also to be found in the British Museum and the Mediterranean Museum in Stockholm, the results of archaeological excavations mounted respectively in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Though objects from Cyprus can no longer be acquired in quantity by American and European museums, many institutions of higher learning continue to excavate on the island, adding to our corpus of knowledge.

Diana Buitron-Oliver is Director of Excavations in the archaic precinct, Sanctuary of Apollo at Kourion in Cyprus.

Notes

1. L. P. di Cesnola, *Cyprus: its Ancient Cities, Tombs and Temples* (New York, 1878), 138–46.
2. R. H. Lang, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, 2d series, vol. 11 (1878): 36.
3. The head of a bearded man was in the McKinnon Collection (Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, November 5, 1971, no. 191, illus.), and was acquired by the North Carolina Museum of Art in 1979 (Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, May 19, 1979, no. 222, illus.). I should like to thank Mary Ellen Soles, Curator of Ancient Art, North Carolina Museum of Art, for suggesting that I publish the head.
4. The head was examined under ultraviolet light by David Goist, Chief Conservator, North Carolina Museum of Art, who noted no recent reworking of the stone surface.
5. A sample of the red pigment was studied under a polarizing-light microscope and the red portion judged to be red iron oxide. David Goist also detected a yellow fluorescence on the lips and leaves of the wreath and suggests that this response may be caused by the remnant of an organic color that has faded away.
6. See O. Palagia, "Les techniques de la sculpture grecque sur marbre," in *Marbres Helleniques* (Brussels, 1987), p. 10 with note 91. Compare the head in Nicosia.
7. For the Idalion Apollo, see E. Gjerstad, *Swedish Cyprus Expedition*, vol. 4, part 2 (Stockholm, 1948), pl. XVI; and V. Tatton-Brown, *Ancient Cyprus* (London, The British Museum, 1987), cover. For the Golgoi statue, see Metropolitan Museum of Art 74.51.2461.
8. E. Gjerstad, *Swedish Cyprus Expedition*, pp. 3–4; and E. Sjöqvist, "Die Kultgeschichte eines cyprischen Temenos," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 30 (1933): 341, figs. 9–10.
9. V. Karageorghis, "Chroniques des fouilles à Chypre en 1967," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 92 (1968): fig. 25 (and figs. 26–28 for some of the other sculpture found with the head discussed here). The Troulli head was discovered by M. Louloupis of the Department of Antiquities during land-leveling operations (Larnaca District Reports 164–38–2). I am most grateful to Mr. Louloupis for telling me about its discovery and for providing the photos of it published here. I thank also the Director of Antiquities, Vassos Karageorghis, and P. Flourenzos of the Department of Antiquities for information regarding the Troulli and Raleigh heads.
10. Larnaca no. 744, probably from Arsos; V. Karageorghis, "Chronique des fouilles à Chypre en 1972," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 97 (1973): 623, fig. 48.
11. The second Arsos head is Larnaca no. 649 found in 1935. The head from Pergamos is Larnaca no. 647; V. Karageorghis, "Ten Years of Archaeology in Cyprus 1953–1962," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1963): fig. 42; and Karageorghis, "Chroniques des fouilles à Chypre en 1967," p. 275, where it is attributed to the same hand or workshop as the Troulli head.
12. Stylistic affinities have been noted between Idalion and Kition (Larnaca). The two cities had an economic relationship based on the copper industry: Idalion was a processing center, Kition was the port. See P. Gaber-Salatan, *Regional Styles of Cypriote Sculpture* (New York, 1986), 51–53. Karageorghis suggests that there was a chain of sanctuaries between Idalion and Lysi ("Chroniques des fouilles à Chypre en 1967," 275), this northern line forming the wide part of a triangle with its apex at Larnaca in the south, and incorporating both Arsos and Pergamos.
13. E. McFadden, *The Glitter and the Gold* (New York, 1971), 150. This book contains a spirited account of Cesnola's life.

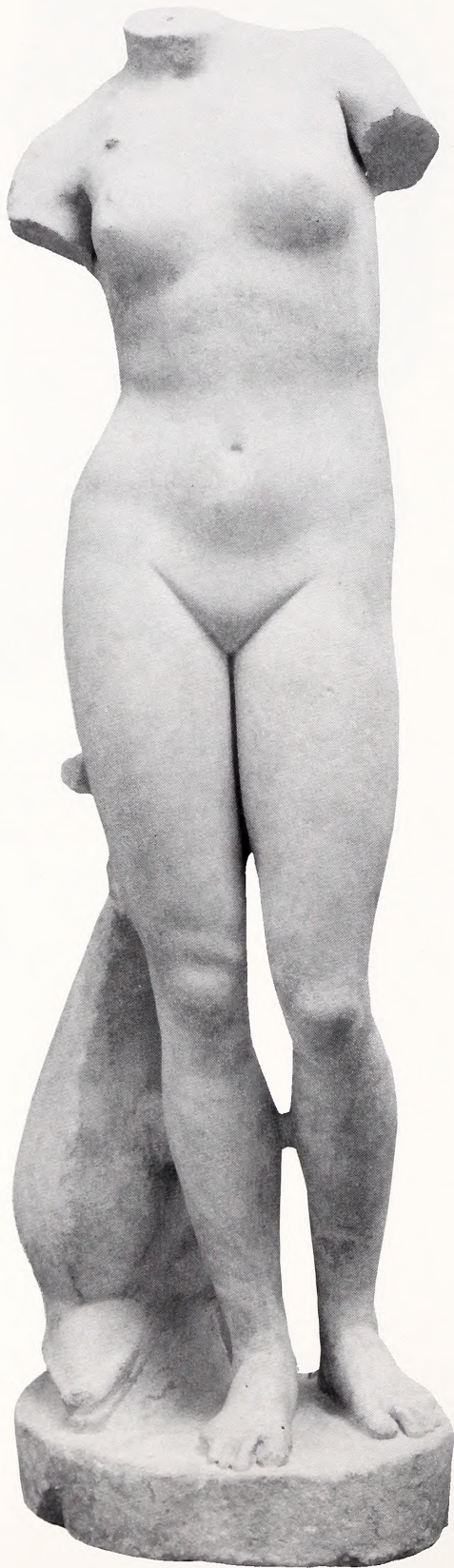


Fig. 1
Aphrodite of Cyrene, North Carolina
Museum of Art. Purchased with
funds from the State of North
Carolina and from the North Carolina
Art Society (Robert F. Phifer Bequest).
80.9.1/2

Tradition and Innovation: A Statue of Aphrodite

by Mary Ellen Soles

The Aphrodite of Cyrene in the collection of the North Carolina Museum of Art (fig. 1) is a deceptively simple piece of sculpture.¹ A nude female, she stands with her weight on her right leg and her left leg bent with the foot drawn slightly back and to the side. Although her arms are now missing from just below the shoulder, enough remains to indicate that the right arm hung down along the side of her body, at least as far as the elbow, and the left was held down and slightly extended away from the torso. The head, which we shall discuss in detail later, is now separated from the body. At the statue's proper right, a dolphin stands on its head, resting on an area with sketchy, wavy lines that suggest both rocks and the sea. The dolphin's body curves up so that its tail, now largely missing, rests against the statue's upper right thigh. The dolphin, which serves as a functional support bearing the weight of the upper part of the statue, and the statue itself stand on a small, roughly oval base.

The statue is identified as Aphrodite because in the traditions of Greek art only this goddess was ever depicted nude.² Men, who exercised and competed in athletic games in the nude, were often shown thus, or even granted a "heroic nudity" in military or political scenes that

did not warrant undress. But women were almost always shown fully clothed, as they would appear in daily life. It was not until the fourth century B.C. that a statue of a nude woman was created for an important public commission, a statue of the goddess Aphrodite by the sculptor Praxiteles for the sanctuary at Knidos. The initial furor over this innovation was superseded by admiration and fame, which guaranteed the sanctuary's reputation throughout the classical period. After this *imprimatur* was given to the depiction of the nude goddess, the sculpture of Aphrodite became a vehicle for Hellenistic sculptors to experiment with the female form. Variations on the theme were numerous, as sculptors attempted by sometimes subtle changes to create new types of representations. The goddess's nudity, however, was never without an implied explanation. A garment dropped by her side, for example, suggested preparation for the bath; a dolphin, as seen in the Aphrodite of Cyrene, alludes to her birth from the sea.

The Raleigh statue takes its full name from a statue of similar type that was found in North Africa at the site of Cyrene, Shahhat, in modern Libya (fig. 2).³ Discovered in December 1913 after a flash flood washed opened a room in the Baths of Trajan in Cyrene and now in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme, or Terme museum, in Rome, this statue was the first example of this particular type to be published, and thus has given its name to subsequently identified statues of the same type, such as ours.

A comparison of the two statues reveals differences as well as similarities. The differences are important for understanding the relationship between statues that both reflect a supposedly identical source of inspiration. Their preservation is comparable—with only the heads and the arms from below the shoulders missing—which accentuates their similarities. The figures are both youthful and rather slender, but the Terme Aphrodite is smaller—only 1.49 meters high including the base. The stances are also closely approximate with weight-bearing right legs, but the left leg of the Raleigh Aphrodite is drawn more to the side and back, creating a slightly more open pose. Although the positions of the right arm of both the Terme and Raleigh statues are analogous, unlike the Raleigh Aphrodite the Terme Aphrodite's left arm was raised almost to shoulder level and held out from the body, and remains of a lock of hair rest on the upper arm. Traces of a lock of hair lie on and just above the Raleigh Aphrodite's right breast. Both statues use a dolphin for a support, but the Terme



Fig. 2
Aphrodite of Cyrene, Museo
Nazionale delle Terme, Rome.



Figs. 3-4
Sieglin Head of Aphrodite,
Württembergisches Landesmuseum,
Stuttgart.

version adds a fish to its mouth. On the Terme statue, draped beside and above the fish is a long fringed garment that the goddess has apparently just removed.

The appearance of the head of the Terme Aphrodite has never been known with certainty, as the head was not found and may have been washed away by the flood that revealed the statue. In the 1950s, the scholar Margarete Bieber proposed that a head like one in the Stuttgart Museum (figs. 3-4) belonged "to the exquisite Aphrodite of Cyrene, which has the pictorial, sensual, and illusionistic quality of Alexandrian art."⁴ Bieber's arguments for selecting this head are based purely on stylistic considerations and deal with one of the more elusive problems confronting those who study later Greek art, that is, the nature of Alexandrian art.

Alexandria, built to the order of Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C., was the capital of Egypt under the Ptolemies, Alexander's successors in the region. As a prosperous cultural center, it attracted poets and men of learning to its famous library. Artists, too, came to Alexandria, drawn by the promise of commissions arising from the new city's need for appropriate decoration. Because artistic activity in Alexandria occurred on such a large scale, it has always seemed probable that some distinctive features of style would have emerged. But identifying such characteristics has been difficult; other than portraits, the extant artistic production that can be firmly linked to ancient Alexandria is small and has not yielded well-defined, peculiarly Alexandrian traits.⁵ Perhaps the greatest scholarly consensus has come on the supposed Alexandrian

preference for surfaces that blur the divisions between separate features, producing a soft, indistinct quality, known by the Italian term *sfumato*. The head in Stuttgart that Bieber links with the Aphrodite of Cyrene demonstrates this softening of lines, especially in the lips, eyelids, eyebrows, and forehead; its facial features flow imperceptibly from one to another.

The Raleigh Aphrodite has not previously figured in published discussions of the Terme Aphrodite of Cyrene. The head of the Raleigh statue is extant, joining perfectly at points of contact on the base of the neck, so that there can be no doubt of its belonging to the statue (fig. 5). Although erosion of the surface from water and possibly fire has, unfortunately, rendered the Raleigh head too poorly preserved to be exhibited, its main features are legible, and they agree with the Stuttgart head (figs. 6-7). The front of the hair is drawn from a center part away from the forehead into a knot at the top of the head. The rest of the hair is drawn in a thick wavy roll to a chignon, bound by a fillet, at the nape of the neck. Remains of a thick lock of hair escaping from the coiffure can be seen just behind and below each ear. The face is a narrow oval with a triangular forehead and rounded cheeks, emphasized by an elongated jawline. Even in its battered state, the Raleigh head shows evidence of the same kind of *sfumato* as the Stuttgart head. *Sfumato* can be seen in the head's subtle suggestion of eyebrows, rather than strict delineation, and in the formation of the eyes and mouth. The virtual congruity of the Raleigh and Stuttgart heads proves that Bieber's selection of the Stuttgart head as stylistically appropriate for the



Fig. 5
Aphrodite of Cyrene (detail with
head), North Carolina Museum
of Art.



Figs. 6-7
Head of Aphrodite of Cyrene, North
Carolina Museum of Art.

Terme Aphrodite of Cyrene was inspired. Bieber's own rationale for a connection of the head with Alexandria on the basis of its style alone is less convincing.

The action depicted by both statues, Aphrodite emerging from the sea, was a popular theme in Greek art from at least the time of the later fourth century B.C. Apelles, a renowned painter of the day, painted Aphrodite rising from the sea, or Aphrodite *Anadyomene*, for the Temple of Aesclepius on the island of Kos. The painting was eventually taken to Rome and dedicated by the emperor Augustus in the Temple of Julius Caesar. According to the ancient author Pliny (*Natural History*, 35.91), when no one could be found capable of repairing some damage to the lower half, the damage itself contributed to the fame of the piece.

Although Apelles' painting has not survived, its appearance may be reconstructed through contemporary literary descriptions.⁶ The lower half of the goddess's body was immersed in the sea, but its outline was revealed through the "transparent" waves. Aphrodite's upper body rose above the waves, and she lifted both hands to her hair to wring out the water and arrange her coiffure. This monumental painting was obviously the model for many three-dimensional representations.

The popularity of the Aphrodite *Anadyomene* in antiquity is attested in the disproportionately large number of such sculpture of all sizes, media, and greatly varying qualities.⁷ The attempt to recreate the effects of painting in another medium perhaps explains the so-called Venus Benghasi (fig. 8), a half-figure *Anadyomene*, existing from the waist up.⁸ Set in a fountain or pool of water, it would have approximated the effect of the painted *Anadyomene*. Many *Anadyomenes* have a garment draped around the lower body. This drapery may have been intended to function like the waves in Apelles' painting, revealing the outline of the body through its clinging transparency. Unfortunately, the heavy-handed execution of the drapery in many of the copies and adaptations tends to obscure the relationship of drapery to statue in thick, repetitious patterns of folds.

Not merely an undraped version of the half-draped type, the nude *Anadyomene* is a flatter, more unifacial conception. On the basis of representations on coins, the nude appears to have been the more popular of the two types.⁹ The Terme Aphrodite of Cyrene is regarded as the best example of all extant copies, closest to the "canonical" type with both arms raised, the right higher than the left. Although

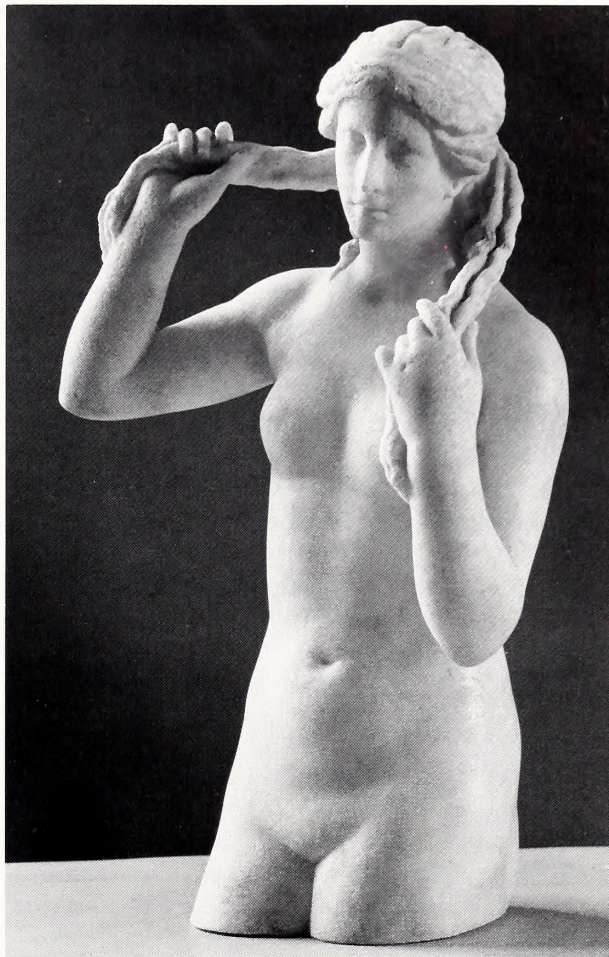


Fig. 8
Venus Benghasi, The University
Museum, University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia.

more than one reconstruction of the missing limbs of the Raleigh Aphrodite is possible, the right arm was probably bent at the elbow with the right hand up to the strand of hair falling to her breast. The position of the left arm is more problematic. It, too, may have been bent at the elbow in order to hold up in the air a now-missing lock that fell from the left side of the head, the remnants of which, as noted above, are visible just behind the left ear. This explanation seems to be the only one that makes sense of this trace of hair. If the left hand hung beside the body, with the hand resting palm out on the buttock, the evidence of the lock of hair must be overlooked. This latter position, with the arm held close to the body, would be an unusual variation, but it should be noted that supports, or struts, would probably not be necessary in this pose.

The date of the Terme Aphrodite of Cyrene is usually thought to be in the second century after Christ, perhaps somewhat later than the building of the Baths of Trajan where it was found. The highly polished surface, soft modeling, elaborate drapery, and the complicated pose of the dolphin suggest a date during the reign of the Antonine emperors, in the years from 138 to 180 after Christ. The dating of the Raleigh Aphrodite is less certain. The drier, more taut modeling of the figure, the less polished surface, and the simplified arrangement of the dolphin without any drapery point to an earlier time than that of the Terme Aphrodite, perhaps during the reign of the emperor Augustus (27 B.C. – A.D. 14) or his successors, the Julio-Claudian emperors (A.D. 14–68). The less ornamented accessories and the restrained corporeality of the figure accord with the taste for classicism in the early first century.

The indebtedness of both the Terme Aphrodite of Cyrene and the Raleigh Aphrodite to a model created in the early Hellenistic period obviously does not preclude inventiveness on the part of later sculptors. Mechanical copying, involving the transfer of basic dimensions from a model to a block of stone, certainly existed in classical times,¹⁰ but more common was the preference for a free-hand quotation of a popular type of sculpture. In its duplication of form coupled with its change in gesture, the Raleigh Aphrodite of Cyrene demonstrates our anonymous sculptor's success in creating a new work.

Mary Ellen Soles is Curator of Ancient Art at the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Notes

1. Aphrodite of Cyrene, North Carolina Museum of Art, 80.9.1/2. Height (from base to the shoulders): 63 in. (160 cm.) Base: 17 × 21 × 4 in. (43.2 × 53.3 × 10.2 cm.) Head now separate. Arms from below shoulders and part of dolphin's tail missing. Broken and mended at ankles and knees. The marble of both head and figure has been identified by Norman Herz through isotopic analysis as coming from a Turkish quarry, either Usak or Mylas. Said to have been found near Castellamare di Stabia, Italy. Formerly in the collection of B. Feurer, Rome and Geneva.
2. For the most complete recent discussion of Hellenistic representations of Aphrodite, see D. M. Brinkerhoff, *Hellenistic Aphrodites: Studies in their Stylistic Development* (Garland, 1978). Also, J. J. Bernoulli, *Aphrodite: Ein Baustein zur griechischen Kunstmythologie* (Leipzig, 1873); M. E. C. Soles, "Aphrodite at Corinth: A Study of the Sculptural Types," (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1976). See also C. C. Vermeule, "Aphrodite Unveiled," *North Carolina Museum of Art Bulletin* 10 (1970): 2–11. For a discussion of the goddess's nudity, see P. Friedrich, *The Meaning of Aphrodite* (Chicago, 1978), 136–40.
3. E. Paribeni, *Le Terme di Diocleziano e il Museo Nazionale Romano* (Rome, 1953), p. 160, no. 372; L. Curtius, "Die Aphrodite von Kyrene," *Die Antike* 1 (1925): 56–60; O. Vasori, *Museo Nazionale Romano*, pp. 170–76, no. 115.
4. M. Bieber, *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age* (New York, 1961), p. 98, fig. 393.
5. J. J. Pollitt notes that "there is relatively little sculpture and painting from Hellenistic Egypt, and what there is does not suggest that Alexandria diverged in any significant way from Hellenistic art elsewhere." (*Art in the Hellenistic Age* [Cambridge, 1986], p. 250).
6. The epigrams referring to the *Anadyomene* have been collected by J. Overbeck, *Die Antiken Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der Bildenden Künste bei den Griechen* (Leipzig, 1868), nos. 1847–63, pp. 349–51. For discussion of the information to be garnered from these epigrams, see O. Benndorf, "Bermerkungen zur Griechischen Kunstgeschichte III, Anadyomene des Apelles," *Athenische Mitteilungen* (1876): 50–66; A. Rumpf, "Anadyomene," *Jahrbuch des deutschen Institut* 65–66 (1950–51): 166 ff.
7. For lists of extant copies, see Bernoulli, *Aphrodite*, pp. 285–90; H. Riemann, *Kerameikos II, Die Skulpturen vom 5. Jahrhundert bis in römische Zeit* (Berlin, 1940), pp. 115–17, nos. 170–72; R. Lullies, *Die kauende Aphrodite* (Munich, 1954), pp. 76 ff.
8. O. Brendel, "Weiblicher Torso in Oslo," *Die Antike* 6 (1930): 52, figs. 5–6; Riemann, *Kerameikos II*, no. 172, no. 39 in the list of half-draped copies; N. Winter, "The Venus Benghasi" (M.A. thesis, Bryn Mawr College).
9. M. Bernhart, *Aphrodite auf griechischen Münzen: eine numismatische Materialsammlung* (Munich, 1936), pp. 43–46, nos. 270–92.
10. For a recent, stimulating discussion of Roman copies, see B. S. Ridgway, *Roman Copies of Greek Sculpture: The Problem of the Originals* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1984), with an earlier bibliography.



Fig. 1
 Funerary relief of Sextus Maelius
 Stabilio, Vesinia Iucunda, and Sextus
 Maelius Faustus, North Carolina
 Museum of Art. Purchased with
 funds from the State of North Caro-
 lina. 79.1.2

Social Status, Marriage, and Male Heirs in the Age of Augustus: A Roman Funerary Relief

by Diana E. E. Kleiner

The handsome funerary relief acquired by the North Carolina Museum of Art in 1979 (figs. 1–4) is an example of a type of sepulchral commemoration favored exclusively by freedmen and freedwomen in Rome in the late Republic and the age of Augustus.¹ The relief documents the significance of the marriage bond, which enabled a couple to produce legitimate children and united them not only while alive but in perpetuity.

Belief in the sanctity of nonadulterous marriage, especially for women, and the importance of the production of male heirs was of significance not only to ex-slaves but also to Rome's first emperor, Augustus, who promulgated laws regulating marriage and adultery and encouraging the procreation of children among the aristocracy and *liberti*. Augustus's moral laws and high regard for male children created a social milieu that encouraged the commission of family-group portraits by freedmen.²

Made of Luna marble and measuring 27½ x 67 x 15 inches (69.9 x 170.2 x 38.1 centimeters), the North Carolina Museum of Art relief was carved to fit as a masonry block into the fabric of a stone tomb probably erected, like others of its type, on one of the major thoroughfares outside Rome. The horizontal frame encloses the



Figs. 2–3
Funerary relief (details), North
Carolina Museum of Art.

sculptured portraits of a man, a woman, and a youth. The subjects, who appear very much alive, seem to gaze out of a large picture window in the facade of their last resting place.

The artist or artists who executed this relief paid special attention to the physiognomies, hairstyles, garments, and gestures of the figures, and to the inscription below their portraits, which allows the relief to be “read” by passersby. The inscription gives the names of the tomb’s three intended occupants: at left, Sextus Maelius Stabilio, the *libertus* of Sextus Maelius; at right, Sextus Maelius Faustus, the *libertus* of the same Sextus Maelius; and between them, Vesinia Iucunda, a *liberta* freed by a woman of the *gens*, or family, Vesinius.³ Thus, the two men are *conliberti* (freedmen of the same patron) and the woman is the freedwoman of a Roman matron named Vesinia.⁴

The pose of the figures indicates that Sextus Maelius Stabilio was married to Vesinia Iucunda: they clasp right hands in the conventional *dextrarum iunctio*—a sign that the marriage vows have been taken.⁵ Moreover, Iucunda wears a bride’s veil and rests her chin in her left hand, the modest gesture of

pudicitia characteristic of the bride.⁶

That Sextus Maelius Faustus is younger than the happily married pair is also apparent. His face is soft and smooth, lacking the forehead furrows and deep creases framing the mouth of Stabilio. Although it is tempting to identify Faustus as the son of Stabilio and Iucunda, a male child born to a freed couple would be designated in the epitaph as *filius* rather than as *libertus*. But if Faustus was born to Stabilio and Iucunda while they were still slaves, the inscription is consistent with an identification of Faustus as both the *conlibertus* and son of Stabilio.

Stabilio has strong features, highlighted by prominent cheekbones and a powerful chin. He has a broad cranium and a face that tapers downward, a stylistic characteristic of the period that he shares with the emperor Augustus and male members of the Julio-Claudian court. He has almond-shaped eyes, straight brows, an aquiline nose, and rounded lips. His features are framed by a hairstyle that recedes at the temples and is arranged in comma-shaped locks over the forehead. His coiffure resembles those worn by other freedmen in funerary reliefs dated between the end of the first century B.C. and

the opening years of the first century after Christ, e.g., Publius Furius and Gaius Sulpicius in a relief now in the Vatican Museums. This hairstyle is similar to the hairstyles of Augustus and other members of the imperial circle.⁷ Stabilio's forehead is furrowed, and there are creases next to his nose. He is depicted almost to the waist and is clothed in a tunic and toga, from which his right hand emerges. He is turned slightly toward his left to face Iucunda and Faustus. In fact, the figure of Iucunda is carefully framed by husband and son: Faustus is turned to his right, toward his parents.

Faustus has an oval face and the same almond-shaped eyes, straight brows, aquiline nose, and rounded lips as Stabilio. The resemblance of the youth to the elder male corroborates the probable father-son relationship. Faustus's hair is combed in a full cap carefully arranged in comma-shaped locks over his forehead. His coiffure is like that of Augustus and young male members of the imperial court, including Gaius and Lucius Caesar. This style is frequently found in portraits of boys on freedmen funerary reliefs of the late first century B.C. and early first century after Christ.⁸ Faustus, too, wears a tunic and toga, and he grasps the upper edge of his toga with his left hand, a conventional gesture in freedmen funerary portraits. Although the size of Faustus's body and hand are comparable to those of Stabilio, Faustus's head has the smaller proportions of a boy. This suggests that the family purchased a less-expensive ready-made relief intended to commemorate three adults and had an artist who specialized in portraits adapt it to their needs by adding the three heads. That the heads were worked separately from the bodies is further indicated by a comparison of the heads with the more summarily worked drapery below. The heads are in higher relief and more plastically modeled.

Careful study of surviving late Republican and Augustan freedmen funerary reliefs from Rome indicates that such a workshop practice was not without parallel. An early Augustan relief from the Via Appia and now in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme was blocked out with four figures, of which only three, a woman and two men, were carved.⁹ The mid-Augustan relief of C. Rabirius Hermodorus and Rabiria Demaris, also from the Via Appia and now in the Terme museum, was recarved in the Flavian period to incorporate the portrait of Usia Prima, a priestess of the goddess Isis.¹⁰

Although some sepulchral commissions in the form of altars were custom-made, many were blocked

out ahead of time in a workshop. The simplest type of altar, with a portrait of the deceased in a pediment and an inscription plaque below, was undoubtedly available for quick purchase. All that needed to be added was the deceased's facial features and the personalized epitaph. Some portraits and epitaphs were carefully conceived, but others were hurriedly prepared, resulting in little correspondence between the deceased and the portrait in age and personal characteristics.¹¹ For example, although Iulia Synegoris, who lived during the reign of the emperor Trajan, was only nineteen when she died, the altar commissioned by her father and now in the Museo Capitolino represents her with lines around her eyes, as well as at her nostrils, mouth, and neck, suggesting impending middle age. Hers may well be a stock portrait on a preprepared altar rather than an actual likeness.¹²

Roman sarcophagi, the favored burial containers for both aristocrats and freedmen from the mid-second to the fourth centuries after Christ¹³ were often carved in advance with full narrative or mythological scenes, but the protagonists' heads were left unfinished so that they could thus be added by a special portrait artist upon purchase. There is considerable evidence for this practice. One of the most outstanding examples is a sarcophagus found in Portonaccio on the Via Tiburtina. This sarcophagus was probably made between A.D. 180 and 190 for a leading military man of the day who participated in the German and Sarmatian wars. The battle scene on the main body of the sarcophagus is complemented by vignettes from the life of the deceased on the lid, including one in which a general grants clemency to his enemies. The other two are of a more private nature, depicting the general in a *dextrarum iunctio* with his wife and the birth of the couple's first child. But the facial features of the main protagonist and his wife were never added, indicating either that this was a workshop piece that was never purchased, or that it was bought in haste and used unfinished for the speedy burial of one of Marcus Aurelius's generals killed on the front.¹⁴

The central figure in the North Carolina Museum of Art relief is Vesinia Iucunda. She is turned to her right toward her husband and grasps his right hand with her right hand. She wears a tunic and palla, the upper edge of which is draped over her head like a veil. She leans her chin on the index finger of her left hand and curls the three other fingers around the edge of the veil. She has a fleshy face and the almond-shaped eyes, straight brows, and aquiline nose of her

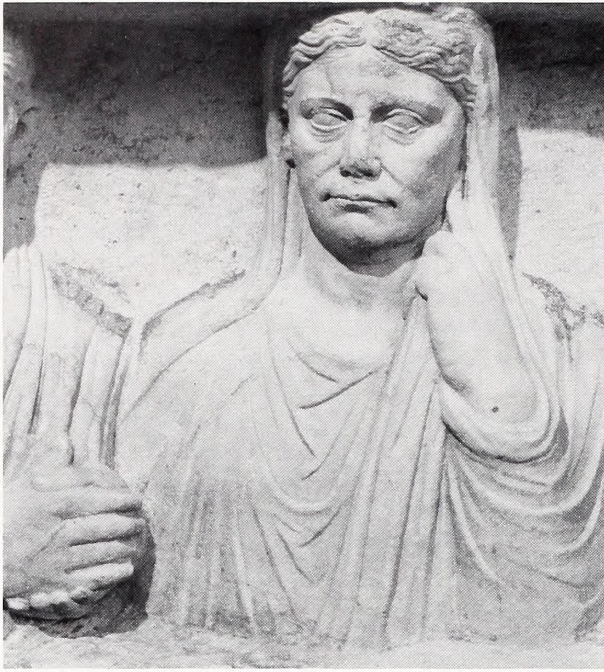


Fig. 4
Funerary relief (detail), North
Carolina Museum of Art.

companions, but thinner lips. That she is a woman of middle age is indicated by the bags under her eyes and the deep creases that mar her cheeks. Her hair is parted in the center and brushed in waves above her ears, a coiffure reminiscent of Greek goddesses and popularized by Augustan court females in the late first century B.C. and early first century after Christ.¹⁵

Stabilio and Iucunda are united by their right hands and also turned slightly toward each other. Their pose contrasts with the poses of husbands and wives in other sepulchral reliefs, which are strictly frontal and exhibit no physical contact. The emphasis on physical as well as marital or familial bonds in sepulchral reliefs appears to be an Augustan phenomenon. It may have been inspired by the increased physical rapport among figures in public-relief sculpture, e.g., those on the north and south friezes of the Ara Pacis Augustae, discussed below.

The protagonists' coiffures, physiognomies, postures, and gestures, as well as the use of Luna marble, which began to be used for such sepulchral commemorations in the Augustan period,¹⁶ suggest a mid-Augustan date for the North Carolina Museum of Art relief, i.e., after the Ara Pacis of 13 B.C. or in the very first years of the first century after Christ.

Of the roughly one hundred extant group por-

traits of freedmen that decorated the facades of tombs just outside Rome in the late Republic and in the age of Augustus, fifteen include depictions of *dextrarum iunctio*. Of these, at least fourteen (e.g., two reliefs in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme [figs. 5 and 6]), can be dated to the Augustan period, which suggests that Augustus's marriage legislation served, at least in large part, as the impetus for such visual images.¹⁷

The sole exception to the Augustan dating is a little-known anepigraphic relief in the Antiquarium Comunale on the Caelian Hill in Rome (fig. 7).¹⁸ This horizontal relief, which comprises a similar three-figure group of a married pair united by a *dextrarum iunctio* and their son, is fashioned out of limestone, which tended to be popular for freedmen funerary reliefs in the late Republic rather than in the Augustan period.¹⁹ Another cue for a pre-Augustan dating is the woman's coiffure, a massive roll of hair tied in a knot and piled on top of the head. This hairstyle, which has been called a *Scheitelknotenfrisur*, has been dated by Hans Peter L'Orange to circa 90–60 B.C.²⁰ A similar coiffure is worn by two women in funerary reliefs now in the Conservatori and Terme museums, which date to 75–50 B.C.,²¹ the probable date for the Antiquarium Comunale relief as well.

The *dextrarum iunctio* motif has precedent in earlier Greek and Etruscan art as a symbol of leave taking, reunion, and marriage, and its use in the Antiquarium Comunale relief probably owes to such earlier prototypes.²² Its appeal for Augustan artists, however, was its particular suitability to contemporary messages about marriage and fidelity, and they began including it regularly in scenes that were meant to underscore family unity.

Although the *dextrarum iunctio* appears to have been used in Augustan times to connote marriage, the depiction of husband and wife in such a pose appears not to be an illustration of the actual marriage ceremony. Roman girls were married as young as ten and at least half were affianced by the age of fifteen.²³ In the North Carolina Museum of Art relief, even though Iucunda still wears the ring of her betrothal on the traditional finger of her left hand, her middle-aged features indicate that the actual marriage occurred long ago.

Aristocratic Roman marriage ceremonies consisted of much more than the joining of the right hands. The bride's hair was carefully dressed in a plaited style, and she participated in a ceremony that included a sacrifice, the consumption of a celebratory



Fig. 5
Funerary relief with *dextrarum iunctio*,
Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome,
InstNegRom 6538.



Fig. 6
Funerary relief with *dextrarum iunctio*,
Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome,
D. E. E. and F. S. Kleiner, neg.
72.11.22.



Fig. 7
Funerary relief of a married couple
and their son, Antiquarium
Comunale, Rome, museum
photograph.

cake, and a bridal procession to her new husband's house. In this procession, the bride was accompanied not only by family and friends but also by three boys, two to lend support, and the other to lead the way with a flaming torch. Also present was a *camillus*, who bore a container filled with the bride's possessions and toys for her future children. The bride carried a distaff and a spindle with wool. As she was carried over the threshold by *pronubi* (men who had been married only once), she wound the wool on the doorpost of her husband's house. One of the Roman woman's outstanding virtues was her devotion to the making of wool, which stood for her dedication to domestic life.²⁴ The festivities in the house included the obligatory purification of the bride, who touched fire and water; the washing of the couple's feet; the bride's salutation of her husband; the transference of the keys to the house to the bride; and the marriage repast for relatives and friends, who rejoiced with festive songs. The celebration culminated in the placement by *pronubae* (women who had been married only once) of the bride on the marriage bed, which stood in the atrium of the house and was elaborately ornamented with flowers. At this time, a *pronuba* performed the *dextrarum iunctio* by placing the bride's right hand in that of her husband.

The bride's preparation for the most important day in her life is recorded in such well-known works

of Roman art as the Aldobrandini Wedding fresco in the Vatican Museums and the procession and sacrifice in second-century sarcophagi in the Vatican and elsewhere,²⁵ but most representations of husband and wife allude to their union in a more subtle way. The *dextrarum iunctio* between husband and wife came to symbolize the marital bond that was the outcome of the marriage ceremony, and children resulting from the marriage are depicted beside their parents. Since freedmen probably did not participate in elaborate marriage ceremonies like the one described above, the use of the *dextrarum iunctio* as a shorthand reference to their union was especially appropriate. While five of the fourteen Augustan funerary reliefs of freedmen discussed above depict the married pair alone, nine others depict the couple in company with *conliberti*, possibly sisters or brothers,²⁶ and especially with their children.²⁷ The familial character of such scenes underscores not only the unbroken bonds between spouses, but also those with other family members, especially offspring.

The North Carolina Museum of Art relief is thus an example of the taste among freedmen for group portraits of happily married couples, which illustrates the increased significance of marriage in the age of Augustus. Augustus's moral legislation not only gave the state jurisdiction over adultery and divorce, but also focused on the fidelity of a woman to her spouse by indicating that the ideal woman

married only one time and honored the marriage bond (*univira*), unless she was widowed, in which case she was required to remarry.²⁸

In general, Roman marriage was a somewhat informal affair; consenting individuals qualified as legal partners as long as they had the agreement of their father or grandfather (*patria potestas*). But marriage did have juridical consequences, especially with regard to status for citizenship and inheritance. Slaves were sometimes allowed to marry, but these unions were considered quasi-marriages (*contubernia*) and participants were often not recognized by their new status as husbands and wives.²⁹ Thus, marriage was a matter of special importance to freedmen. The depiction of the *dextrarum iunctio* in sepulchral portraits of freedman represents the importance of marriage to freedmen and also expresses the belief that the union formed in life would not be broken in death.³⁰

The major reason for marriage in Roman times was the production of legitimate children, especially male children who could serve as heirs. Although the Romans practiced infanticide, especially for girls, and indeed the very foundation of Rome was attributed by legend to Romulus and Remus, abandoned children who were suckled by a she-wolf and raised by a shepherd and his wife, children began to take on increased importance under Augustus.³¹ Prior to the Augustan period, children were not thought to be a worthy subject for public or private art because they were not considered particularly important. Augustus began his rise to power when he himself was still a youth, however, and his youthfulness became a significant part of his political ideology.³² His marriage legislation rewarded aristocratic women who had three or more children (and imposed some inheritance restrictions on those who had no children), and freedwomen who had at least four children.

Augustus's penchant for youth is evident in his portraits, which emphasize his smooth skin, clear eyes, and tousled hair, both when he was in his twenties and even in his sixties. Augustus, the eternal youth, also had a penchant for commissioning portraits of his grandsons and heirs, Gaius and Lucius Caesar, from their infancy on, either in company with the emperor himself or with their mother, Julia, Augustus's only child.³³

Nowhere is Augustus's emphasis on children more apparent than in the sculptural decoration of the Ara Pacis Augustae (13–9 B.C.), dedicated by the Senate to celebrate Augustus's return from Gaul and Spain

and commemorating his bestowal of the blessings of peace on Rome and the empire.³⁴ The great friezes on the north and south sides of the monument, which depict the procession of 13 B.C. in honor of the laying of the monument's foundation stone, incorporate portraits of Augustus, Marcus Agrippa, Livia, Julia, and several male and female children. These are complemented by depictions of the infants Romulus and Remus being suckled by the she-wolf in a relief panel on the northwest side, and of two bouncing babies on the lap of a matronly female figure usually identified as Tellus (Mother Earth) on the southeast. On the southwest side, Aeneas is accompanied by his son Iulus Ascanius. Thus, the monument depicts the past, present, and future of Rome by its male children, be they historical, mythological, or legendary. The children included on this monument are an allusion to Augustus's dynastic aspirations for Gaius and Lucius Caesar, and they illustrate his moral objectives for both his own family and those of the Roman elite.³⁵

Thus, the funerary relief in the North Carolina Museum of Art is a microcosm of family values in the age of Augustus, both of the imperial circle and the aristocracy, and of freedmen. The relief proclaims the freedman's pride in the legal marriage that he was allowed only upon manumission from slavery and also his pride in his status as a parent (his new position as a freedman meant a better life for his son).³⁶ It attests to the indivisibility of marriage and familial bonds formed while still in slavery, retained thereafter, and lasting in perpetuity. At the same time, the depiction of a married couple and their child in this privately commissioned sepulchral group portrait of freedmen reflects the moral regulations and familial responsibilities that Augustus attempted to impose on both the nobility and the freed class in Rome.

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Notes

I thank Mary Ellen Soles for introducing me to this interesting Roman funerary relief by inviting me to publish it in the *North Carolina Museum of Art Bulletin* and for supplying both basic information and excellent photographs. I am also grateful to Fred S. Kleiner and Gordon Williams for reading the manuscript and offering helpful comments and criticism.

1. The Museum purchased the funerary relief from a dealer who acquired it from a Swiss private collection, where it had been for over fifteen years. The provenance is unknown.
2. Studies of freedmen funerary reliefs have been published by E. K. Gazda, "Etruscan Influence in the Funerary Reliefs of Late Republican Rome: A Study of Roman Vernacular Portraiture," *Ausstieg und Niedergang der römische Welt* 1, 4 (1973): 855–70; P. Zanker, "Grabreliefs römischer Freigelassener," *Jahrbuch des k. deutschen archäologischen Instituts* 90 (1975): 267–315; H. G. Frenz, *Untersuchungen zu den frühen römischen Grabreliefs* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977); and D. E. E. Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture: The Funerary Reliefs of the Late Republic and Early Empire* (New York and London, 1977).
3. The full inscription reads:
SEX MAELIVS VESINIA L SEX MAELIVS
SEX L STABILIO IVCVNDIA SEX L FAVSTVS
4. For the relationship among such figures on Roman funerary reliefs, see Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, 22–46.
5. For the *dextrarum iunctio* in Roman art, see B. Kötting, "Dextrarum iunctio," *Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum* 3 (Stuttgart, 1957): 881–88; L. Reekmans, "La dextrarum iunctio dans l'iconographie romaine et paléochrétienne," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 31 (1958): 23–95; L. Reekmans, "Dextrarum iunctio," *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale* 3 (Rome, 1960): 82–85; Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, 24–25; D. E. E. Kleiner, "A Portrait Relief of D. Apuleius Carpus and Apuleia Rufina in the Villa Wolkonsky," *Archeologia Classica* 30 (1978): 246–51; D. E. E. Kleiner and F. S. Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, Rendiconti* 51–52 (1978–80): 389–400; and G. Davies, "The Significance of the Handshake Motif in Classical Funerary Art," *American Journal of Archaeology* 89 (1985): 627–53.
6. For the *pudicitia* pose, see M. Collignon, *Les staties funéraires dans l'art grec* (Paris, 1911) 291 ff.; G. Radke, "Pudicitia," Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* 23, 1 (1959): 1942–45; W. Köhler, "Pudicitia," *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale* 6 (1965): 539–40; M. Bieber, "Roman Men in Greek Himation (Roman Palliati): A Contribution to the History of Copying," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 103 (1959): 374–417; and Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, 25, 162–64.
7. Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, pp. 126–27, cat. no. 89.
8. *Ibid.*, cat. nos. 55, 67, 68, and 69.
9. *Ibid.*, cat. no. 50.
10. *Ibid.*, cat. no. 63.
11. D. E. E. Kleiner, *Roman Imperial Funerary Altars with Portraits* (Rome, 1987), 29.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 197–98, cat. no. 70, pls. XL.3, XL.1.
13. Freedmen continued to commission altars, but they turned increasingly to larger coffins that afforded a more extensive field for decoration and accommodated the change in religious practice from cremation to inhumation. Most scholars have suggested that the majority of Roman sarcophagi housed the remains of the nobility, but as I have tried to demonstrate elsewhere, such monuments were also commissioned by freedmen, possibly in much larger numbers than has hitherto been thought. See Kleiner, *Roman Imperial Funerary Altars*, p. 78, and especially D. E. E. Kleiner, "Roman Funerary Art and Architecture: Observations on the Significance of Recent Studies," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 1 (1988): 118.
14. P. G. Hamberg, *Studies in Roman Imperial Art* (Copenhagen, 1945), 176–80. A. Giuliano, ed., *Museo Nazionale Romano, le sculpture* 1, 8 (Rome, 1985), 177–88, no. IV, 4 (L. Musso).
15. Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, 127–41.
16. *Ibid.*, 72–75. D. E. E. Kleiner and F. S. Kleiner, "A Heroic Funerary Relief on the Via Appia," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1975): 257–59.
17. *Ibid.*, cat. nos. 13, 18, 28, 31, 34, 60 (fig. 5), 68, 80 (fig. 6), 81, 85, 87, 90, 92.
18. The relief (inv. 7494) is now in the Antiquarium Comunale on the Caelian Hill. Its dimensions are: 1.40 m. × 0.64 m. × 0.40 cm. It was published and illustrated for the first time by Zanker, "Grabreliefs römischer Freigelassener," p. 288, fig. 20. See also Frenz, *Untersuchungen zu den frühen römischen Grabreliefs*, 19–20, 121, 237.
19. Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, 67–70.
20. *Ibid.*, 129–31.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 129–31, 204–5, 243, cat. nos. 15 and 83.
22. Davies, "Handshake Motif," 627–35.
23. M. K. Hopkins, "The Age of Roman Girls at Marriage," *Population Studies* 18 (1965): 309–27, esp. 315. M. Durry, "Le mariage des filles impubères dans la Rome antique," *Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité*, ser. 3, 2 (1955): 263–73; M. Durry, "Le mariage des filles impubères à Rome," *Revue des études latines* 47 (1969): 17–25. A. del Castillo, "Sobre la controversia entre matrimonio romano y pubertad femenina," *Rurios* 4 (1977): 195–201.
24. While Augustus's adopted sons, Gaius and Lucius Caesar, were trained in the business of government, his daughter and granddaughters were taught to spin and weave. Suetonius, *Augustus*, 64.
25. For the Aldobrandini Wedding fresco, see B. Nogara, *Le nozze Aldobrandini e paesaggi con scene dell'Odissea e le altre pitture murali antiche conservate nella Biblioteca Vaticana e nei Musei Pontifici* (Milan, 1917); M. Borda, *La pittura romana* (Milan, 1958), 204 ff.; and W. Helbig, *Führer durch die hof-fentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom* I, 360–66, no. 466 (B. Andreae). For marriage sarcophagi, see A. Rossbach, *Römische Hochzeits- und Ehrendenkmäler* (Leipzig, 1871); K. Fittschen, "Hochzeitsarkophag San Lorenzo," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1971): 117–19; S. Wood, "Alcestis on Roman Sarcophagi," *American Journal of Archaeology* 82 (1978): 499–510; N. Kampen, "Biographical Narration and Roman Funerary Art," *American Journal of Archaeology* 85 (1981): 47–58; and G. Koch and H. Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*

- (Munich, 1982): 97–106. For the Roman marriage ceremony, see J. Marquardt and A. Mau, *Privatleben der Römer*² (1886), 39 ff.; H. Blümner, *Die römischen Privataltertümer* (Munich, 1911), 345 ff.; Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* 14, 2, cols. 2259–86 (Kunkel); G. Williams, "Some Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies and Ideals," *Journal of Roman Studies* 48 (1958): 16–29.
26. Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture*, cat. nos. 60, 80, 87.
 27. *Ibid.*, cat. nos. 65, 68, 81, 85, 90, 92.
 28. The *Lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus* was legislated in 18 B.C. and amended in A.D. 9 by the *Lex Papia Poppaea*. Nonetheless, some scholars have suggested that Augustus attempted to introduce marriage legislation as early as 28 or 27 B.C., although it appears to have been withdrawn due to strong opposition. For Augustus's marriage legislation, see most recently R. I. Frank, "Augustus' Legislation on Marriage and Children," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 8 (1975): 41–52; P. Csillag, *The Augustan Laus on Family Relations* (Budapest, 1976); L. Raditsa, "Augustus' Legislation Concerning Marriage, Procreation, Love Affairs and Adultery," *Ausstieg und Niedergang der römische Welt* 2, 13 (1980): 278–339, esp. 295–305 for the controversy over the dating of the legislation; and S. Treggiari, "*Digna condicio*: Betrothals in the Roman Upper Class," *Echos du monde classique. Classical Views* 28 (1984): 419–51. E. Badian, "A Phantom Marriage Law," *Philologus* 129 (1985): 82–98, most recently argues against the introduction of marriage legislation by Augustus in 28–27 B.C.
 29. For *contubernia*, see T. Frank, "Race Mixture in the Roman Empire," *American Historical Review* 21 (1916): 697; P. E. Corbett, *The Roman Law of Marriage* (Oxford, 1930); S. Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic* (Oxford, 1969), 209; B. M. Rawson, "Roman Concubinage and other *de facto* marriages," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 104 (1974): 279–305; S. Treggiari, "*Contubernales* in *CIL* 6," *Phoenix* 35 (1981): 42–69; and P. R. C. Weaver, "The Status of Children in Mixed Marriages," in *The Family in Ancient Rome, New Perspectives*, edited by B. M. Rawson (Ithaca, 1986), 145–47.
 30. Kleiner, "D. Apuleius Carpus and Apuleia Rufina," 246–51; Kleiner and Kleiner, "Apotheosis of Antonius and Faustina," 389–400; Davies, "Handshake Motif," 632–35; Williams, "Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies," 25.
 31. For the abandonment of children in antiquity and later, see W. V. Harris, "The Theoretical Possibility of Extensive Infanticide in the Graeco-Roman World," *Classical Outlook* 32 (1982): 114–16; and J. Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance* (New York, 1988), with an earlier bibliography. Little has been written on children in Roman society or Roman art. Although a few scholars have focused specifically on children, e.g., M. Manson, "The Emergence of the Small Child in Rome (Third Century B.C.—First Century A.D.)," *History of Education* 12 (1983): 149–59, and B. M. Rawson, "Children in the Roman *Familia*," *The Family in Ancient Rome, New Perspectives*, edited by B. M. Rawson (Ithaca, 1986), 170–200, others have discussed them in the context of the family, of Roman law, etc. See, e.g., S. Bertman, *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Amsterdam, 1976), and B. M. Rawson, "The Roman Family," in *The Family in Ancient Rome*, 1–57. I am presently preparing a book on the representation of children in Roman art entitled *Princes, Barbarians, and Slaves: Children in Roman Art*.
 32. D. E. E. Kleiner, "Private Portraiture in the Age of Augustus," *The Age of Augustus*, edited by R. Winkes (Providence and Louvain, 1986), 112–16.
 33. D. E. E. Kleiner, "The Great Friezes of the Ara Pacis Augustae: Greek Sources, Roman Derivatives and Augustan Social Policy," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome, Antiquité* 90 (1978): 772–74. Kleiner, "Private Portraiture," 116–17. J. Pollini, *The Portraiture of Gaius and Lucius Caesar* (New York, 1987); P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1988), 215–23.
 34. The bibliography on the Ara Pacis Augustae is vast and continues to grow. See most recently A. Borbein, "Die Ara Pacis Augustae: Geschichtliche Wirklichkeit und Programm," *Jahrbuch des k. deutschen archäologischen Instituts* 90 (1975): 242–66; J. Pollini, "Studies in Augustan 'Historical' Reliefs" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1978), 75–172; Kleiner, "Great Friezes of the Ara Pacis Augustae," 753–85; M. Torelli, *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1982), 27–61; E. Buchner, *Das Sonnenuhr des Augustus* (Mainz am Rhein, 1982); E. La Rocca, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Rome, 1983); E. Simon, *Augustus, Kunst und Leben in Rom um die Zeitenwende* (Munich, 1986), 26–46; G. Koepfel, "Die historischen Reliefs der römischen Kaiserzeit V. Ara Pacis Augustae Teil I," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 187 (1987): 101–57; and P. Zanker, *Power of Images*, 117, 120–23, 125, 144, 158–60, 172, 175–76, 179–83, 189, 198, 203–4, 218, 252–53, 255, 276, 287, 312, 315.
 35. Kleiner, "Great Friezes of the Ara Pacis Augustae," 772–76.
 36. H. Wrede, *Consecratio in Formam Deorum: Vergöttliche Privatpersonen in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz am Rhein, 1981), 108–9. Kleiner, *Roman Imperial Funerary Altars*, 87–88. D. E. E. Kleiner, "Women and Family Life on Roman Imperial Funerary Altars," *Latomus* 46 (1987): 552–53.



Fig. 1
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios, North Carolina Museum of
Art. Purchased with funds from the
North Carolina Art Society (Robert
E. Phifer Bequest). 84.1

The Rise of the Severan Dynasty in the East: Young Caracalla, about the Year 205, as Helios-Sol

by Cornelius C. Vermeule

Prologue: The Roman Imperial Crisis of 192 to 200

The Mediterranean world from Spain to Mesopotamia, the Roman Empire from Britain to the Sudan, was thrown into a year of imperial turmoil by the murder of Commodus on the last night of A.D. 192. The good old Senator Pertinax was proclaimed emperor, chiefly by senior magistrates and the Senate, but his stern, sometimes tactless policies led to his assassination after a few months. The Praetorian Guard, true source of power in Rome, put the empire up for sale to the Croesus who would give them the largest number of golden *aurei* per soldier. The greedy winner was a foolish old official named Didius Julianus, who paid the price and made his wife and daughter empresses on the new issues of coinage from the mint of Rome. The tough legions guarding the frontiers along the Germanic and Balkan northeast, in Syria near the western limits of Parthian power, and on the Antonine and Hadrianic walls in Britain rose up in disgust, proclaimed their three governors or generals emperors, and made the same marching moves on Rome that had followed bad Nero's death in 68 and stern old Galba's murder in 69.

The winner of Rome, the prize of the year 193, was the northern commander of the toughest soldiers closest to Italy, Lucius Septimius Severus from Lepcis Magna

in North Africa. As a rising officer and magistrate with good connections, Septimius Severus had married a Syrian lady of Hellenistic royal stock, Julia Domna, and they had two very young sons, Caracalla (born 188) and Geta (born 189). On taking power in Rome, Septimius Severus shipped the praetorians overseas, organized a new guard, gave the title of "Caesar" to Clodius Albinus in Britain, and headed east with his loyal legions to fight the governor of Syria, Pescennius Niger. After battles across Asia Minor, the big victory came at Issus in south-eastern Cilicia in 194. There, over half a millennium earlier, Alexander the Great had defeated the Persian hosts. In 195 Severus punished the Parthian allies who had helped Niger. He then proclaimed Caracalla Caesar, made himself adopted brother of the murdered Antonine Commodus and therefore "son" of the revered Marcus Aurelius (161–180), and, finally, marched back to Lugdunum (Lyons) to eliminate Clodius Albinus in 197.

There was one major loose end to wrap up, a massive attack on the heartland Parthians, who were the successors of the Seleucid kings and, ultimately, the old Persian empire east of Syria. A string of victories ended with annexations of new areas in 199, triumphal tours of Syria and Egypt, proclamation of Septimius Severus and Caracalla (an emperor since 198) as joint-consuls at Antioch-on-the-Orontes in January 202, and, finally, a return to Rome. Thus, in the lands of the rising sun where Alexander the Great had won immortality, Septimius Severus and his royal son, officially named Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, found their dynastic fortunes.

Severan Policies in the Arts: Glorification of Helios-Sol—Alexander the Great

As with every new Roman imperial dynasty from the Julio-Claudians (Augustus) through the Flavians (Vespasian) and the Spanish emperors (Trajan and Hadrian) to the Antonines (Antoninus Pius), policies in the visual arts, portrait sculptures and numismatic designs were inaugurated to glorify the new rulers, their ancestors both real and political, their aspirations, and their successes. Septimius Severus had much to proclaim and, also, much to explain. He was of mixed Roman and African stock, the first person who might be considered black to rule the western civilized world, in an era when, to borrow the coinage of Frank M. Snowden, Jr., color preju-



Fig. 2
Helios in frontal quadriga. Bronze coin of Kolossai in Phrygia, struck 185–195. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

dice was not yet invented. Julia Domna, Severus's wife, could trace her ancestry back through the last, minor kings of Emesa (Homs) in Syria to the great Seleucid dynasty and thence to the Macedonian successors of Alexander the Great. And Septimius Severus was no *parvenu*: his family had had equestrian status, with members in the Senate, and he had been a consul in 190 under Commodus. Yet he had killed thousands of Roman soldiers, allies, and citizens of great old cities like Byzantium, Cyzicus, Nicaea, and Syrian Antioch, not to mention Gaul in the West, in his quest for sole power. He had exterminated the aristocratic and other supporters of his rivals, while nourishing the fiction that his official ancestry went back to Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and all the Antonines. The arts were called upon to account for a lot.

If there could be one youthful god who could personify the rise of Severan fortunes from the East, where Niger and the Parthians had been wasted and Julia Domna's semidivine ancestors had held sway from Asia Minor to Afghanistan, it was the Greek Helios or the Roman Sol, the true symbol and embodiment of the sun (fig. 2). From the beginning, the Hellenistic Greeks saw the rising sun as a personified symbol of Alexander the Great's conquests of the East, and the young, athletic god with long locks and radiate crown came to take on the divine Macedonian's features. Such was the case with the Colossus of Rhodes, created fewer than fifty years after Alexander's death. Other young gods who had triumphed in the East, like Dionysos, came to take on the face of the conqueror who died at Babylon and was buried in Egyptian Alexandria. A large-scale marble head of this divine type was found at Scythopolis, a city of the Decapolis on the borders of the Holy Land, and is now in the Palestine Archaeological (Rockefeller) Museum in Jerusalem (fig. 3).



Helios-Sol under Several Guises, in Antonine, Flavian, and Early Severan Times

At the height of the Roman Empire, in the period of peace and prosperity under the Antonines, the figure of Helios-Sol assumed further aspects, becoming Aion or Aeternitas to suggest the immortality of *imperium*. When the Emperor Antoninus Pius died and was cremated in 161, the site of cremation in the Campus Martius of Rome was marked by an eagle-topped column with a sculptured base. The major

Fig. 3
Young divinity-Alexander the Great.
Jerusalem, Palestine Archaeological
Museum, from Scythopolis.
Photograph by Kristin Anderson.



Fig. 4
Aion-Aeternitas carrying Antoninus Pius and Faustina I heavenward. Base of the Column of Antoninus Pius. Vatican Museums, Rome.

scene showed Antoninus Pius and his empress, Faustina I, who had died back in 141, being carried skyward to the ranks of the gods and goddesses on the back of a winged figure with face and physique based on the Hellenistic images of Helios-Alexander the Great (fig. 4). The connection with Aeternitas identified Helios-like figures with the stability of the imperial family throughout the empire, as well as with triumphs in the old Hellenistic East.

Associations between Helios-Alexander the Great and an emperor on the rise in the East are perfectly documented on a silver *denarius* struck at an eastern mint in the first months of the emperor Vespasian's advent to power and his march on Rome in the year 69. The obverse of the coin gives us the facing bust of the radiate Helios-Sol, and the reverse is dominated by a cuirassed general-emperor, who had been detailed by the emperor Nero to suppress the revolt of Jews in the Holy Land and restore the authority of Herod's family and the Roman procurators (fig. 5). When Vespasian (ruled 69–79) successfully entered Rome, he found that the egocentric Nero had placed a colossal statue of himself as Helios-Sol in the pleasure gardens near where Vespasian was to build and



Fig. 5
Silver *denarius* of Helios, and Vespasian in military uniform, hand raised in salute, struck 69–70. British Museum, London.

his son-successor was to dedicate the Flavian Amphitheater, known to the people as the Colosseum after the statue nearby. Some say Vespasian had the head of the great statue changed from an idealization of Nero to a similar presentation of his own plump, robust features. Other ancient sources report that, eventually, the colossal statue's head was recast to represent just Helios-Sol, meaning the iconography of Alexander the Great as seen on the early *denarius* of Vespasian. The statue was moved by Hadrian during his rule (117–138) and was surely melted down in the late fourth century when even the only mildly pagan Helios-Sol no longer appeared in Roman imperial art.

From the Antonines back to the Flavians and back again to the Severans, the path laid out for Helios-Sol-Alexander across the imperial firmament was well charted. By the third century after Christ, notions of Roman imperial Aeternitas had been threatened by barbarian onslaughts and civil wars. In an effort at official, propagandistic escape from the harsh realities of economic and military decline, imperial perceptions of Helios-Sol assumed qualities unparalleled for any of the major Olympian protectors of the ancient world. At the height of Severus's reign early in the third century, in the year 207 to be precise, mint masters struck a gold *aureus* with the imperial bust on the obverse and a bust of Helios-Sol on the reverse, rays springing from the curly hair and a cloak around the shoulders (fig. 6). The reverse inscription refers to Helios-Sol as PACATOR ORBIS. The Sun as pacifier of the universe was a pleasing new concept for a dynasty, the Severan, that had won the empire by fighting everywhere from Mesopotamia to Marseilles. Identified with Helios, the emperor or his princely successor-designate could appear as both a conqueror in Alexander the Great's image and a bringer of peace, including the agricultural prosperity of sunny weather.



Fig. 6
Gold *aureus* of Septimius Severus and
Helios as pacifier of the universe,
struck 207. Berlin Museums.



Fig. 7
Aureus of Trajan and Helios with
Parthian title, struck 116. Museum of
Fine Arts, Boston.

Helios-Sol as a Military and Dynastic Symbol on Coins of Trajan and Hadrian

That the most comfortable role for Helios-Sol was to assure the perpetuity of dynastic conquests in the East is evidenced from Roman *aurei* struck in the last years of the rule of Emperor Trajan (113–117), when he was campaigning from Armenia to Arabia, and the first two years of Hadrian (117–118), when war broke out again all over the East, from Mesopotamia to Cyrene in North Africa. The first *aureus* links Trajan's military bust on the obverse with a radiate, draped bust of Helios and the title *PAR-THICO* (in the dative as a dedication from the Senate and the Roman people) on the reverse (fig. 7).

Another *aureus*, an early one of Hadrian, assigns to Helios a different military and dynastic task. The East (*ORIENS*), symbolized by the sun-god's bust with features somewhat like those of Alexander the Great, is shown recognizing Hadrian with all his new imperial titles as son of the Parthian victor Trajan and grandson of the emperor Nerva (96–98) (fig. 8). It was the aged Senator Nerva who adopted Trajan, who, in turn, may have designated Hadrian as his successor, although some say Trajan's wife Plotina engineered Hadrian's accession in the turmoil following Trajan's untimely death from a stroke.

A third *aureus*, also with a bust of Helios on the reverse, was struck in 118 and shows that Hadrian was firmly in control in the East as well as everywhere from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea and a bit beyond (fig. 9). Here the sun-god's face is based very clearly on a Hellenistic head of Alexander the Great. Sensitive, intellectual, later-neurotic Hadrian was not above using the visual arts to identify his dynastic fortunes with those of the Macedonian hero in lands where his last successors were still remembered and where the last, little Hellenistic client kingdoms ruled by Seleucid descendants had only recently been terminated by the Romans.

A final *aureus*, which demonstrates that Hadrian remembered that he was really successor to the divine Trajan and not to Helios-Sol, Alexander the Great, or any Seleucid king, shows the bust of Hadrian's deified "father" Trajan in place of Helios on the reverse (fig. 10). The circulation of these four coins, Trajan and Helios, Hadrian and Helios, Hadrian and Helios-Alexander, and Hadrian with Trajan, around the empire, must have helped to root the connections between the sun-god, the imperial family, and imperial policies in the East in the minds of Romans and barbarians alike.



Fig. 8
Aureus of Hadrian and Helios of the
Orient, struck 117. Museum of Fine
Arts, Boston.

Fig. 9
Aureus of Hadrian and Helios-
Alexander, struck 118. Museum of
Fine Arts, Boston.

Fig. 10
Aureus of Hadrian and the deified
Trajan, struck 117–118. Museum of
Fine Arts, Boston.



Fig. 11
Bronze statuette of Helios in military
costume, from lower Egypt, Roman
Imperial Period. Musée du Louvre,
Paris.

The Military Helios in Egypt

A bronze statuette of Helios-Sol brought to the Musée du Louvre in Paris from lower Egypt in 1852 leaves no doubt that the sun-god was a military figure in the second or third centuries of the Roman Empire (fig. 11). His face and hair are modeled on the Lysippic portraits of Alexander the Great, or the Alexander Rondinini identified with Leochares, in the fourth century B.C. The sun-god's armor is that of a Hellenistic or Roman officer—a Roman imperial field cuirass, with cloth belt or *cingulum*, of the second or third century after Christ, based on a type found in Athenian funerary monuments during Alexander the Great's lifetime. Seven rays from the diadem or crown on Helios-Sol's head suggest the days the sun-god worked. The god's left hand holds a cornucopia around which a serpent is entwined. This confirms that the military Helios-Sol, the face a likeness of Alexander the Great, was also thought of as a bearer of health and plenty, the by-products of peace, in the East.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (Caracalla) Augustus as Helios-Sol

Severan fortunes, Severan artistic policies, and Roman imperial iconographic traditions in the East set the stage for the depiction of Septimius Severus's older son and coemperor as the sun-god. A marble statue in the North Carolina Museum of Art, Emperor Caracalla in the Guise of Helios, shows the seventeen-year-old prince standing tall, larger than life, six and a half feet in height, almost seven feet counting the plinth on which the figure is placed (figs. 1 and 12–17). The crown on his head contains holes for twelve rays, one for each Olympian divinity or for each sign of the zodiac or month of the year, again an allusion to the eternal qualities of the sun-god and, by implication, of the Severan dynasty. Pinned with a large, imperial brooch on the right shoulder, the god's cloak is arranged across chest and back, and is brought forward under the left arm to fall over the left forearm below the elbow. The statue is supported by a massive tree trunk behind the left leg and thigh, and the legs are braced by a huge rectangular strut running from tree trunk to left calf and then on across to the calf of the right leg. Although impossible not to notice, this strut is not offensive; it virtually disappears as the viewer moves from one side of the statue to the other. Finally, there is the head of one of the horses of the sun-god, replete with bridle and reins for driving the chariot across the sky, against the front of the tree-trunk support. The horse's head could be thought of as rising out of the eastern ocean around the earth, as the chariot of the sun-god begins its daily course across the sky.

Superficial damage to the statue is evident from crown to plinth to horse's left ear and mouth. The twelve solar rays were made of bronze, shining golden or enhanced with gilding, in either case designed to suggest the sun's golden shafts of light. Questions demanding iconographic and aesthetic answers are the action of the extended right arm and hand, which are missing from above the elbow, and the attribute in the missing left hand and against the left shoulder. Numerous appearances of Helios-Sol standing, on the reverses of Severan and later Roman imperial coins, suggest the statue's right hand was raised, palm open and turned upward, in a classical gesture of salute and benediction (figs. 26 and 5). This Roman salute would symbolize the blessings conferred by the sun-god on all mankind in an era when the emperor Caracalla would soon (the year



Fig. 12
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios, North Carolina Museum of
Art.

Figs. 13-14
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios (details), North Carolina
Museum of Art.



Fig. 15
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios (detail), North Carolina
Museum of Art.

212) bestow Roman citizenship on all free people in the empire. Alternatively, the right hand could have held the whip with which Helios urged on his chariot or the caduceus, the snake-entwined staff of good health.

The object in the left hand and along the upper arm is a torch, which represents the sun-god as light of the world (fig. 15). The horse's head as support beside the leg of Helios-Sol was an attribute of the Dioskouroi, Castor and Pollux, the young heavenly twins, brother and half-brother of Helen of Troy, divine horsemen often used to portray Caracalla and his younger brother Geta as princely offspring of the Jovian Septimius Severus. Statues of Castor made in the second century of the Roman Empire show a crescent moon and a star on his cap, which indicate that the twins lived in the sky through which Helios passed (fig. 18).



Figs. 16–17
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios (details), North Carolina
Museum of Art.

The Portrait of Caracalla

Comparisons with the various divine and real faces illustrated so far, especially with the rather cold, ideal, academic *Dioskouros* in Kansas City, confirm that the *Helios* in the North Carolina Museum of Art is more than merely an early Hellenistic concept of the sun-god, with an iconographic bow to the traditional representation of Alexander the Great. The Raleigh *Helios* is a true portrait, albeit heroized with the sun-god's upward glance and with an exaggerated, lengthened version of the leonine hairstyle of Alexander. This *Helios-Sol* is a likeness of a specific young man of the Roman Empire, the older son of Septimius Severus, who officially became Marcus Aurelius Antoninus when the family adopted itself into the family of the great Marcus Aurelius and his popular predecessor Antoninus Pius. The name Caracalla, an affectation of the Severan legions, came later, bestowed because the young emperor wore the rough, wool cloak of the common soldier when marching from York to Damascus or when campaigning in the field.

The moody brows, the snub nose, the small lips, the broad cheeks, and the full chin (despite various damages) are signatures of the adolescent Caracalla at seventeen years of age, in the year 204. Such precise dating, given perhaps a year's time lag, is arrived at by comparisons with the portrait of Caracalla on the Arch of the *Argentarii* (the Moneychangers) in the Forum Boarium (the Cattle Market) between the Capitoline Hill and the River Tiber in Rome. The inscription tells us that this arch, really a rectangular gateway with sculptures and rich architectural moldings, was dedicated between December 203 and December 204. The Arch of the *Argentarii* in Rome and the statue of Caracalla as *Helios-Sol-Alexander* belong to the years when the Severans were enjoying the fruits of all their marches, battles, intrigues, proscriptions, and political settlements in East and West. A number of other, less-godlike official portraits of Caracalla in marble revolve around the likeness on the Arch of the *Argentarii*. Caracalla's portrait in a sacrifice scene is however, perhaps more conservative, more Roman than the face of the *Helios* statue and may suggest that Caracalla is a little older, say eighteen, in the Raleigh statue (fig. 19).

The panel on the Arch of the *Argentarii* also included Caracalla's child-bride Fulvia Plautilla, but her image was rubbed out, either in 205 when she was banished following her praetorian-prefect father's downfall, or in 212, after Geta's assassination, when



Fig. 18
Dioskouros (Kastor), Roman
Imperial Period, time of Hadrian,
about 125. William Rockhill Nelson
Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.



Fig. 19
Caracalla, sacrificing at small altar-
table, Plautilla erased, 204. Interior
relief on the Arch of the Argentarii,
Rome.

Caracalla had her put to death. Caracalla and Plautilla were married in 202, and she appears on Roman imperial coins and on coins of more than fifty urban mints in the Greek imperial world. If the statue of Helios-Caracalla was set up before Plautilla's removal, there could have been a companion statue showing her as Selene-Luna, goddess of the moon. Such parallels in iconography, Helios-Sol for the Augustus and Selene-Luna for the Augusta, were found on the Severan coins of Asia Minor and beyond. When Caracalla as sole survivor introduced the Roman imperial coin named after himself, the *Antoninianus* or double-*denarius*, he was portrayed with the crown of Helios-Sol and his mother, Julia Domna, had the crescent of Selene-Luna behind her shoulders.

A large head from a marble statue or draped bust of the young Caracalla belonged in the early days of the Turkish republic to a British ambassador. It was purchased at Kula in eastern Lydia, a center for antiquities from several Greco-Roman sites, including cities like Sebaste in western Phrygia. This portrait carried the Roman model on the Arch of the Argentarii from the heart of the imperial capital into inner Asia Minor. The head exhibits greater maturity and a somewhat more heroic cast or treatment, a stepping-stone to the inspired face of young Caracalla as the sun-god (fig. 20).

There are also numerous Roman imperial coins, some Roman bronze medallions, and many issues from various cities in Asia Minor, the Greek imperial coins, which show precisely this portrait of Caracalla in profile. The large bronze example adduced here was struck at Sebaste in Phrygia, a city not far from the modern market town where the marble head of Caracalla was acquired (fig. 21).

Sources for the Statue

Except for its individual face and cascading locks of deeply-drilled, undercut hair, the figure of Emperor Caracalla in the Guise of Helios in the North Carolina Museum of Art is certainly a good mechanical copy of some famous statue of Helios or Helios-Alexander the Great created at the outset of the Hellenistic age or in the early Roman imperial period, when works of sculpture were invented in styles developed originally from Myron around 450 B.C. through Lysippos in the 320s or slightly later. The top and back of the head, the locks on the neck



Fig. 20
Caracalla from Lydia or western Phrygia, about 204. Private collection, London.

at the rear, and the cloak behind the shoulders were left in a roughened state. This method of carving and finishing often happened in the Greek imperial world when a statue was commissioned to be set in the niche of a theater, a fountain house (*nymphaeum*), or a building dedicated to the cult of the imperial family (*Sebasteion* or *Kaisareion*).

The torso not covered by the cloak and the legs of the Helios-Caracalla are well finished, without the high, mechanical polish characteristic of small sculptures from several workshops in western Asia Minor. That a pointing machine was involved in the copy is confirmed by the appearance of a *puntello* or rectangular bump used for guiding the carver to the final surfaces, a mark in relief that was left on the right rear buttock, where it would not be seen when the statue was placed in its semicircular niche (fig. 22). This manner of copying a statue's lower back, from cloak to backside to upper legs, was common for statues and fragments found in major Flavian through Severan cities all over the Greek and Roman East. Such statues were set up, for example, in the gymnasium, baths, and theater areas of Salamis on the eastern coast of Cyprus. A tantalizing fragment of a statue like Helios-Caracalla in Raleigh lies on the ground amid the extensive ruins of Caesarea Maritima, a coastal city in ancient Samaria and modern Israel (fig. 23).



Fig. 21
Caracalla on bronze coin of Sebaste in western Phrygia, about 204. The reverse shows Perseus, aided by Athena, decapitating Medusa. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Fig. 22
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios (detail), North Carolina
Museum of Art.



Fig. 23
Fragment of a statue similar to
Emperor Caracalla in the Guise of
Helios. Caesarea in Samaria, Israel,
on the site. Photograph by Kristin
Anderson.

It is impossible to make more than an educated guess on the name of the sculptor of the ultimate original statue behind Emperor Caracalla in the Guise of Helios. The handling of the drapery recalls that of the Vatican Ganymede or the Apollo Belvedere, both Roman copies connected with Leochares, who worked on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus and lived to do statues of Alexander the Great. The grandest early Hellenistic Helios, the godfather of all such statues, was the Colossus of Rhodes, created in bronze between 292 and 280 B.C. by Chares of Lindos, a pupil of Lysippos. Slender but tangible evidence suggests that this great statue had the ideal features, the face of Alexander the Great and stood shading the eyes with his right hand, a pose not much different from the statue in Raleigh. Although toppled by an earthquake some sixty years after its construction, the Colossus of Rhodes lay on the ground for all to see and copy throughout the remainder of classical antiquity. Small marble reliefs give the general pose, and the coins of Rhodes in the Hellenistic age show an Alexander-like head en-
framed by long locks and crowned with twelve rays,

as is Helios-Caracalla. The marble original of the Raleigh statue could have been a lesser work by Chares, or it might have been a prototype of about 325 B.C. common to both the Hellenistic Colossus of Rhodes and various Roman imperial statues.

A further clue to the date of the statue on which Helios-Caracalla was based is the inclusion of the horse's head (fig. 24). Animals in Greek and Roman art are often timeless; cows and dogs seem to go back to famous statues by Myron at the outset of the Athenian Golden Age. Horses, however, became larger and more naturalistic about the time Alexander the Great rode Bucephalus across Asia Minor, into the Achaemenian-Persian heartland and up into the mountains sloping into Afghanistan. The bridled horse's head and reined neck beside the left leg of Helios-Caracalla is a steed in the best traditions of Athenian sculpture around 320 B.C. Compare, for example, the powerful, muscular stallion being controlled with a carrot in one hand and a whip in the other by a smallish black groom, a trainer of horses from Arabia or Africa, in a relief found in Athens on the ancient city's outskirts toward Eleusis and



Fig. 24
Emperor Caracalla in the guise of
Helios (detail), North Carolina
Museum of Art.

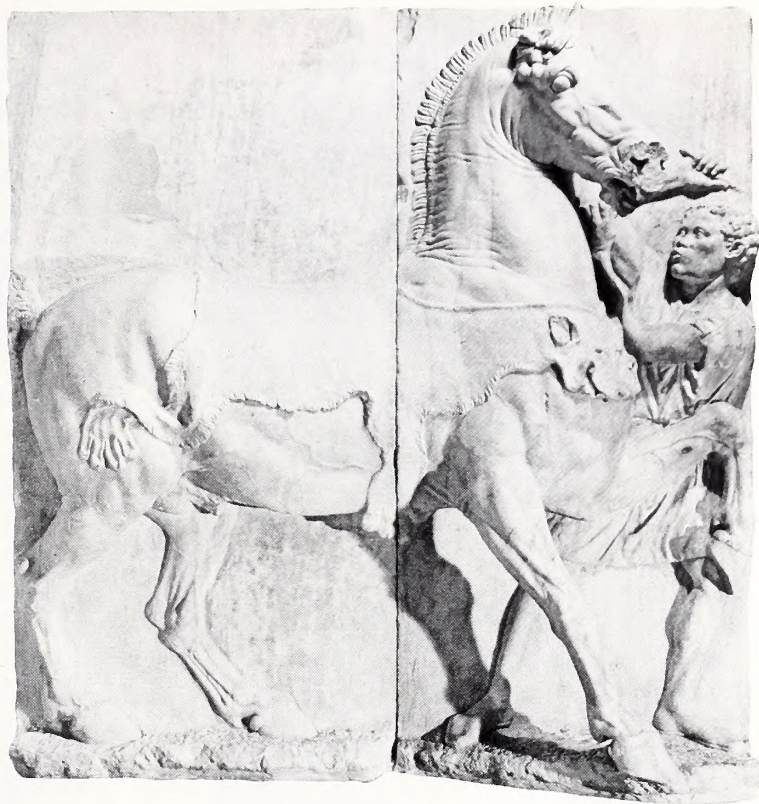


Fig. 25
Horse and groom from Athens, about
320 B.C. National Museum, Athens.

Megara (fig. 25). This relief must have come from a big funerary monument or cenotaph (since the rider is missing) of an Athenian general (the panther-skin saddle cloth suggests this) of about 320 B.C., just before such monuments were curtailed by a decree of austerity. The Athenian stallion's head has the same, if not slightly more, naturalistic qualities preserved in the equine symbol at the feet of the Severan sun-god in Raleigh.

Helios-Caracalla and Other Young Severans

When Septimius Severus died at York in 211, he did so exhorting his young sons Caracalla and Geta (raised to full rank in 209) to enrich the army and trust no others. In the following year Caracalla caused Geta to be murdered in the imperial palace that they had divided up between them on the Palatine in Rome. By 215 Caracalla was a tough soldier worthy of his "rough cloak" nickname and an overt imitator of Alexander the Great (even to recruiting a

"Macedonian phalanx" to accompany him eastward).

On the emperor's arrival in Egypt, the mint of Rome, or one of its ateliers closer to the imperial entourage, struck an impressive gold *aureus* with Caracalla's military bust on the obverse along with the unmerited title *PIUS* and the name *GERMANICUS*, won while fighting the Alemanni along the Danube. The reverse of the specimen seen here, which belonged to the legendary Sir Arthur Evans and was found near Alexandria in Egypt, gives the imperial magisterial dates equivalent to 216 and features Helios-Sol-Alexander in the pose of the statue at the North Carolina Museum of Art (fig. 26). The coin shows a radiate crown on the god's head. The cloak is pinned on the right shoulder and is wrapped around the left arm. The right hand is extended with the palm out and upward in a salute of benediction. Only the attribute in the left hand is different, being the orb of world dominion. Such a Helios appeared on coins of later emperors involved in the East throughout the remainder of the third century. At the time this coin was struck, Caracalla was campaigning from Armenia through Mesopotamia to



Fig. 26
Aureus of Caracalla with Helios
standing on the reverse, struck 216.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

northeast Syria. On a road near Carrhae he was to be cut down from behind by a few disaffected soldiers while he was relieving himself.

After the death of Caracalla, Macrinus the Prefect was proclaimed emperor and his very young son Diadumenianus became Caesar, a title equivalent to crown-prince. But the armies longed for the glorious days under Septimius Severus and the brutal but respected Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, or Caracalla. The ladies of Julia Domna's royal Syrian family played on this military nostalgia, securing the empire first for a worthless young priest of the Syrian sun-god named Elagabalus (218–222), and then for his much-finer first cousin with the splendid and historic official name of Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander (222–235). Rumors circulated that both these young Severans were natural sons of their cousin Caracalla.

In the several months before the army and people of Rome put Elagabalus to death along with his mother Julia Soemias (Julia Domna's niece and Caracalla's first cousin), the sun-priest emperor was forced to tolerate little Severus Alexander as Caesar. This Alexander's mother, Julia Mamaea (sister to Julia Soemias), worked successfully to secure sole power for her little boy. The city of Thyesteira in Lydia commemorated the uneasy truce between the Syrian sisters and the joint rule of their progeny by striking a huge bronze medallion with the imperial bust on the obverse, and on the reverse, a form of Helios popular in inner Lydia, in which Helios drove a splayed-apart, four-horsed chariot (fig. 27). Once again, associations between Helios and new or young Roman rulers were manifest in the East.

Traditions of Helios

Through all the links between the emperors, Helios, and Alexander the Great, it should be remembered that Helios rising from the oceans of the East was a standard theme in the pediments of Greek and Roman temples from the Parthenon at Athens around 440 B.C. onward. In its final form in the second century of the Roman Empire, even the great Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus on the Capitoline Hill in Rome had Helios-Sol driving his four-horsed chariot upward in the left-hand angle of the pediment and Selene-Luna heading downward into the western sea on the other side of the enthroned Olympians, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva (Zeus, Hera, and Athena),



Fig. 27
Elagabalus and Severus Alexander,
Helios in quadriga on the reverse.
Bronze medallion of Thyateira in
Lydia, struck 221–222. Museum of
Fine Arts, Boston.

whom the Romans felt controlled destiny. In the troubled third century of the empire, when the powers of the Capitoline triad seemed to wane, Helios-Sol became a god almost more important than Jupiter, and he certainly eclipsed Juno and Minerva (who did live on as holy wisdom).

A left-hand section of a small pediment, two surviving blocks of what must have totaled five, in the collections of the University of California at Berkeley shows Helios-Sol–Alexander the Great driving his four horses upward over a reclining personification of Oceanus or Thalassa (fig. 28). Mother Earth (Tellus or Ge, Terra Mater) must have reclined in the other direction on the downward side, which then showed Selene-Luna driving her two bulls into the seas beyond. The date of this surviving section of pediment is not far from that of the Helios-Caracalla in Raleigh. Analogies from other such pediments in Greece and Asia Minor make it tempting to think the central block had a bust of Caracalla or Elagabalus or Severus Alexander on a circular shield (the mirror of the sun) in high relief, as the focus of the wide triangle. Such a pediment surely would have surmounted the small shrine or canopy in which was placed the statue of Helios-Caracalla now in Raleigh.

Caracalla, young or mature, would not have been shy about being portrayed as Helios-Sol–Alexander or put on a pedestal in a pediment or elsewhere. He enjoyed such honors as a lad in his teens and made them an even greater part of his forceful image when he reached his mid-twenties and sole rule. Proof of this comes in a very rare coin of Side in Pamphylia on the southern coast of Asia Minor, struck about the end of 214 or into 215, as Caracalla was progressing across Asia Minor on the way to wars in the East. The coin shows the emperor's ferocious bust in wreath, cloak, and armor on the obverse. On its unusual reverse (fig. 29), a giant bust of Caracalla, similarly dressed and equipped, is mounted on a circular pedestal of the type used to display such busts in museums nowadays. In front of the bust stands Ares-Mars, the god of war in full armor, spear held vertically in the right hand and a *parazonium* or sheathed sword in the left. Or it may be that this youthful figure in Greek field helmet and cuirass of about 325 B.C. is not Alexander the Great. Ares or Alexander, he stands to admire Caracalla, who has displaced god or hero on the pedestal. All this suggests considerable conceit.



Fig. 28
Section of pediment with Helios and
Oceanus, Severan Period. Lowie
Museum of Anthropology, University
of California at Berkeley.



Fig. 29
Caracalla's bust contemplated by
Ares—Alexander the Great. Bronze
coin of Side in Pamphylia, struck
about 215. Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston.

Summation: Helios-Caracalla at the Apogee of Greek Imperial Art

The ideas and interconnections put forth here swirl, like the cloak of the sun-god, around a large and very impressive work of art. The statue in the North Carolina Museum of Art, Emperor Caracalla in the Guise of Helios, emerges as an imperial masterpiece of the very decades, during the reign of Septimius Severus (193–211), when older orders and values in the classical world were giving way to the substance and spirit of late antiquity. So much is embodied in this image, Greek athletic art of the fourth century B.C., the mystique of Alexander the Great, the rise of an Afro-Syrian dynasty in the Roman Empire, and, finally, the emergence of a god challenging the old Olympian pantheon in the minds and hearts of the ancient world. Helios survived most other pagan divinities in the age of Constantine the Great (306–337) and the rise of Christianity. His radiate qualities, transferred to the emperor, were to pass to the saints of Byzantium and the Latin West. The chariot of Helios became the chariots of fire of the prophet Elias or Elisha, and in this way the sun-god is still worshipped on the mountaintops of the eastern Christian world. In hindsight, artists under Septimius Severus seem prophetic in their portrayal of the young Caracalla as Helios.

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Note

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The works of art cited and illustrated in these pages can, for the most part, be found in publications of the Department of Classical Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Figs. 3 and 23 appear in *Jewish Relations with the Art of Ancient Greece and Rome* (1981). Figs. 4–10 and 26 will also appear in "Alexander the Great Conquers Rome," the proceedings of the symposium on Alexander the Great held at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, in May 1983. Fig. 11 is in A. de Ridder, *Les bronzes antiques du Louvre*, I, *Les figurines*, Paris 1913, p. 55, no. 344. Figs. 18 and 28 are published in *Greek and Roman Sculpture in America*, the J. Paul Getty Museum and University of California Press, 1981, as nos. 173 and 199. Fig. 19 is catalogued in E. Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome* I, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1968, p. 89, fig.

91; also, Caracalla's portrait, and fig. 20, are in H. B. Wiggers, M. Wegner, *Das Römische Herrscherbild*, III Abteilung, Band 1, Berlin 1971, pp. 77, pls. 2a, 2b, 23a, and 66. Fig. 21 is discussed in depth in *Art of Antiquity*, vol. 5, part 1, *Numismatic Studies, Divinities and Mythological Scenes in Greek Imperial Art* (1983), no. 15. Fig. 25, the Athenian "Horse and Groom Relief," is pp. 33, 193, pl. 46, of *Greek Art: Socrates to Sulla* (1980), and is discussed in "The Horse and Groom Relief in Athens," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 10, presented to Sterling Dow on his eightieth birthday, edited by K. J. Rigsbee, Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina, 1984, pp. 297–300. Fig. 27, the medallion of Elagabalus and Severus Alexander, appears in *The Museum Year: 1982–83*, pp. 23, illus., 43; also, F. Sternberg, Zurich, Auction XI, 1981, no. 305. Finally, fig. 29, Caracalla at Side in Pamphylia, is in *Romans and Barbarians* (1976), no. C 83; and *Roman Art in Greece and Asia Minor* (1968), frontispiece. The coin of Kolossai in Phrygia, here fig. 2, is also in *Roman Art in Greece and Asia Minor* (1986), p. 163, fig. 98 in the latter book.

The most sensible reconstructions of the Colossus of Rhodes, together with illustrations of a relief and a coin reflecting the huge bronze, and a history of the statue's fortunes, appear in H. Maryon, "The Colossus of Rhodes," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 76, 1956, pp. 68–86, figs. 1–4. The iconography of Alexander the Great was also well explored in *The Search for Alexander, An Exhibition*, New York Graphic Society, Boston, 1980–83, including likenesses of his successors who sought to be shown in his semidivine image. Of the five or six supplements to this catalogue, the best for numismatic iconography and Greek imperial survivals is the *Supplement of The Royal Ontario Museum*, Toronto, Canada, 5 March to 10 July 1983. Severan preoccupation with the Alexander the Great image, including portraits of Caracalla on big gold medallions featuring Alexander on the reverses, or as parallel obverse types, are documented in "Alexander the Great, the Emperor Severus Alexander and the Aboukir Medallions," in *Revue Suisse de Numismatique*, Vol. 61, 1982, pp. 61–72, pls. 5–8.

Frank M. Snowden, Jr.'s two epoch-making books which deal, *inter alia*, with aristocratic black Romans are *Before Color Prejudice: The Ancient View of Blacks*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983; and *Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Graeco-Roman Experience*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1970.

Finally, other but not many marble statues of Helios-Sol have survived. One in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, has the features of Alexander the Great, is clad in cloak and tunic, and has two horses' heads beside the right leg: S. Reinach, *Répertoire de la statuaire* 1, Paris, 1897, p. 169, no. 7. The statue most like North Carolina's Helios is in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen: S. Reinach, *Répertoire de la statuaire* 4, Paris, 1910, p. 61, no. 1; F. Poulsen, *Catalogue of Ancient Sculpture*, 1951, p. 366, no. 525, pl. XXXIX, from Rome and the work of the sculptor Chryseros of Aphrodisias in Caria. It is an ideal figure, depending on an ultimate original similar to that of Helios-Caracalla.



The Iconography of Marriage and Death in Ancient Italy: A Funerary Vase from Centuripe

by J. R. Green

Centuripan pottery takes its name from the small hill town of Centuripe, about twenty miles southwest of Mount Etna in eastern Sicily, where most examples have been found. All Centuripan vases of known provenance come from the cemetery in Centuripe, and that they were intended as grave vases is clear both from the range of shapes, the impractical construction, and the impermanent nature of their decoration.¹

Although the period of Centuripan-pottery production is not certain, it is commonly supposed to have run through much of the third and perhaps some of the second century B.C. It is a pity that most of the examples from the Centuripe cemetery were excavated without regard for context or proper recording. Other pieces of this general type from a sanctuary in nearby Morgantina, which seems to have a destruction date of 211 B.C., have not yet been properly published, so one cannot judge their relationship to the rest of the Centuripan series.

In 1975 the North Carolina Museum of Art was fortunate enough to acquire an excellent example of a Centuripan vase (frontispiece and fig. 2).² Because studies of Centuripan pottery make but a slender corpus, the vase in Raleigh is worth examining in some detail.

Fig. 1
Funerary vase (detail), North Carolina
Museum of Art. Purchased with
funds from the State of North
Carolina. 75.1.9



Fig. 2
Funerary vase, North Carolina
Museum of Art.

The shape of this vase is that of a *lebes gamikos*, a wedding vessel of traditional form that was presented to the bride together with other offerings on the day of her wedding. The Raleigh example is large. It stands some 37 inches (94.0 centimeters) high and is 12¾ inches (32.5 centimeters) in diameter at its widest point, the bottom of the lid. Although it is reconstructed from fragments, nothing of any significance is missing, and it is in a good state of preservation. There is some minor repainting, principally along the joins of the fragments.

The clay is a brick color and contains some white grit, but the whole was covered with a slip. The vase was made in six separate component parts: the base, an intermediate support member, the body and lid, another intermediate member, the conical support, and the topmost piece. The main part of the lid is one with the body. This feature, combined with the size and the multiplicity of pieces forming the upper part, make it clear that the vase was totally impractical for ordinary use. We conclude that it must have been intended for the grave, although even carrying it in procession to the grave must have been difficult. We can speculate that it must have been taken to the grave in pieces and had its final assembly in the

tomb. Because the decoration, both painted and relief, is confined to the front half of the vase, it must have been intended to stand against a wall.

The vase stands on a carefully modeled tall foot and stem, which bear traces of pink paint that must originally have covered the surface. Between the foot and stem and the body sits a disc support. The present one is modern, but there must have been a similar piece there in antiquity. At the bottom of the body (fig. 3), immediately above the disc, there is a molding decorated with a leaf-and-dart pattern picked out in gold paint. Above the molding is a ring of foliage that grows up around the lower body. The ring of foliage comprises acanthus leaves alternating with long lotus petals, and in between, small buds and rosette flowers. (The rosette from the right space is missing.) All the foliage in the ring was made separately and applied on the surface of the vessel. The acanthus leaves and probably the lotus were painted pink against a blue-gray background; the rosettes are yellow-gold. The acanthus leaves are further enlivened by the addition of gold paint on the inner face of the tips of the leaves as they curl over. Stems for the buds and flowers may have been painted on the surface, but no sign of them remains. In the modeling and plasticity of the acanthus and the detailing of the flowers, the Raleigh vase is one of the most careful and elaborate in the whole Centuripan series. It is also one of the few to have this combination of acanthus leaves and long petals, particularly in such a well-developed form. The choice of motif and the elaborate treatment suggest that the Raleigh vase belongs to a fairly advanced stage in the Centuripan sequence.

Leaf-and-floral work is characteristic of many arts of the middle and third quarter of the fourth century B.C. Among those who exploited this fashion was the painter Pausias of Sikyon, whose name came to be particularly associated with it in later times. Pausias's work is reflected in a number of fine mosaics of that period. The taste for the leaf-and-floral motif spread broadly and endured for over a century. In the course of the third century B.C., acanthus motifs became popular, especially in metalware, where one regularly finds acanthus leaves curling up from the bases of vessels.³

It was from metalware that the idea of developing relief decoration seems to have spread to pottery. Among the earliest pottery examples are the well-known mold-made bowls with decoration in low relief, which seem to have been introduced in Athens about 225 B.C. Some of the earliest and finest of



Fig. 3
Detail of relief ornament at the base
of the wall of the funerary vase,
North Carolina Museum of Art.

these bowls have a combination of acanthus leaves and lotus petals with flowers interspersed in a manner very similar to that on the Raleigh vase (fig. 4). Another very attractive example of the motif is the interior of the lid of a silver *pyxis*, or box, found many years ago in a hoard in Taranto in southern Italy (fig. 5). Its combination of acanthus, lotus petals, and flowers shows very clearly the effect the potter of the Raleigh vase was trying to create. When found, the *pyxis* contained coins of the period 290–270 B.C. Although it is tempting to date the *pyxis* to the same period and suppose that there was some delay before the motif was introduced in pottery, some scholars suggest that the date of the *pyxis* should be lowered to match the date of the pottery. In any event, the foliage on the Raleigh vase suggests a provisional date near the end of the third century B.C., matching that of the Athenian bowls.

On the upper wall of the body is another zone of relief decoration (fig. 6). Above a line of astragal, or bead-and-reel, is a Doric frieze, the metopes containing little Erotes. Erotes were a favorite motif in the Hellenistic world of the third and second centuries B.C. Commonly found on women's jewelry, especially earrings, they seem to have connotations not only of love but of good fortune and happiness.

Such themes may seem strange in the context of the grave, but they are appropriate enough on a vessel designed to accompany a woman into a blessed afterlife.

The reliefwork on the Raleigh vase is enlivened with bright color: against the dark blue background of the metopes, the astragal, the triglyphs, and the figures are picked out in gold. The objects the Erotes carry are hard to make out: they may be *tympana* (like that held by the figure on the right of the painted scene below) or they may be *paterae*, like those in the attic zone above. The figures are about three quarters of an inch high. Each is the same, made from the same series of molds, but they have been attached at slightly different angles so that some seem to run and others to fly. Several other Centuripan vases have a Doric frieze in this position with triglyphs and metopes, and some have Erotes, but the Raleigh vase again stands apart in the care with which the frieze has been carried out.

Above the frieze, and slightly raised above the background surface, is a flat zone painted in black against a white background with a rectangular pattern that has red filling in alternate spaces. The zone seems to be intended as a representation of the coffers of a ceiling, which have been drawn as they

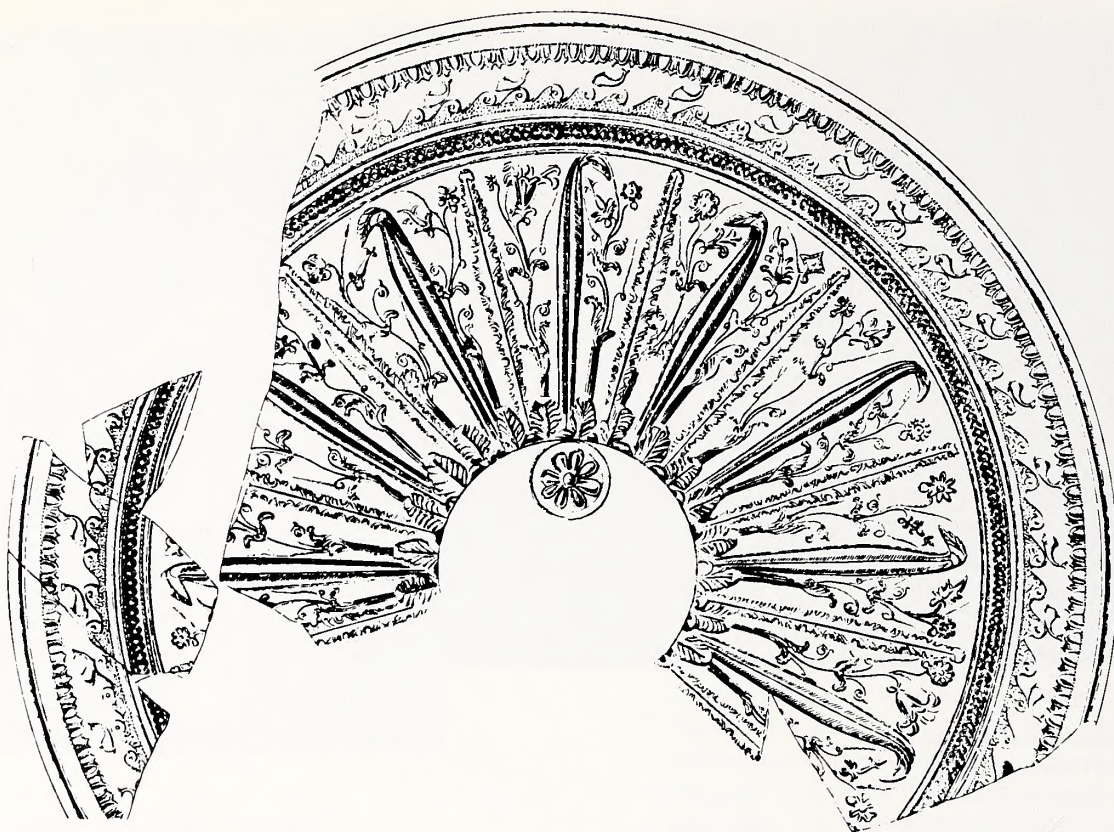


Fig. 4

Drawing of the decoration on a
molded-relief bowl from Athens
(after S. Rotroff, *Agora* 22, pl. 73).



Fig. 5

Interior of the lid of a silver *pyxis*
from the Taranto Treasure (after
Wuilleumier, pl. 2).



Fig. 6
Detail of the upper wall of the
funerary vase, North Carolina
Museum of Art.

would appear to someone looking up at a building: we see only the farther (here lower) part.

Architecture also influences the treatment below the projecting edge of the lid. Here, the potter uses ideas from the ornamental brackets seen under the cornices of buildings, bulls' heads alternating with *paterae*, the libation vessels used for offering wine to the gods. The depiction of *paterae* is suitable in the context, as is the depiction of bulls' heads, which have a generally sacrificial connotation. The objects are gold against a dark blue background, which seems to have had pink applied over.

The edge of the lid has an astragal in relief. Although the surface is rather worn and the treatment somewhat difficult to make out, the upper face of the lid has painted decoration. At mid-level is a broad band of dark paint, and above and below it, zones of verticals between lines in pink. There is also a band of pink at the top, and at the edge at the bottom, a neatly drawn band in a wave pattern.

At the top of the lid, between two golden bead-and-reel moldings, is a frieze in which *paterae* with petal decoration alternate with figures that have their arms raised and heads forward, seeming to support the upper molding (fig. 7). Gold against a pink

background, these support figures are of a kind known as *telamones* or *atlantes* (after Atlas, who supported the world on his shoulders).⁴ In this case, the figures are alternately male and female. The two females are maenads; each has long hair and wears a *peplos*. Distinguished by his wild, wavy hair, the male is a satyr. He is naked but for a sort of small skirt, or *perizoma*, wrapped about his loins. This is perhaps reminiscent of the way actors dressed in the part of satyrs in the theater.

Like the treatments on the upper body of the vase, this frieze motif has been borrowed from architecture. It is regularly used in the upper levels (the "attic") of buildings, where the figures are used to give visual support to the cornice. The best-known example of this kind of treatment is probably the attic level of the Forum of Augustus in Rome, constructed at the turn of the first centuries B.C. and A.D. (fig. 8). Although the figures on the Forum of Augustus copy those of the Erechtheion on the Athenian Acropolis, the motif was less popular in Greece proper than in Italy. In this respect as in others, the Forum of Augustus is a nice example of the blending of Italian with classical Greek traditions. Earlier, in southern Italy and Sicily, the support



Fig. 7
The attic member at the top of the
lid of the funerary vase, North
Carolina Museum of Art.

figures were very often satyrs and maenads. The scheme probably reached Rome by way of Campania, where we have an example with satyrs and maenads preserved in the Forum baths at Pompeii of 80–75 B.C.

In the south, the first example of the motif is to be seen in the great Temple of Olympian Zeus at Agrigento in Sicily, about 480 B.C., where huge *telamones* are arranged about the side walls of the building. But it was not until the third century B.C. and later that such treatments became more common and the combination of satyr and maenad began to predominate. Examples of the motif can be found in the theater at Monte Iato in Sicily, in the theater at Syracuse, on a grave monument near Vaste in Apulia, in Montescaglioso in Lucania, and in what is thought to be an elaborate private house in Centuripe itself. Curiously enough, the Raleigh example seems to be the only one known in the vase series to incorporate the motif.

The frieze motif serves two main purposes. First, it places the vase in a long southern Italian and Sicilian tradition in which potters display an architectonic sense in the construction and decoration of

their vessels. Decorative motifs borrowed from the cornices of buildings were already commonly used on the lips of pots in the red-figure and so-called Gnathia vases of Apulia in the fourth century B.C. Here, that architectonic tradition is even stronger. The vase emerges from the calyx of leaves above the stem to the decorated area of a wall; the wall is completed by the Doric frieze surmounted by a cornice with its bulls' heads and *paterae*, again borrowed very directly from architecture. The lower part of the lid forms the first level of the roof, which is in turn surmounted by the frieze motif, which was commonly used in architecture at the attic level. Then above the frieze comes the crowning element. In this sense, the motif is entirely appropriate in its context: its evocation of grander monuments adds to the grandeur of the vase.

But the subject matter of the frieze can also be interpreted as having an independent meaning. *Paterae* appear not only under the cornice, but probably in the hands of the Erotes of the Doric frieze as well. They remind us of libation to the gods, and so quite likely of good fortune. Satyrs and maenads belong to the retinue of Dionysos, the god of wine, the theater, and, particularly in southern Italy and Sicily, of happiness in the hereafter. Although it would be easy to overemphasize the strength of the symbolism here, the Raleigh vase was intended for the grave, and the general connotation is of happiness in the afterlife.

Above the attic frieze comes a saucer-shaped support member. We are not certain that this piece belongs here, but the vase must have had something of this type in this position. Above the support member is an intermediate element covered with a pink wash. The crowning element is a knob or handle in the form of a *lebes gamikos*, that is, a repetition of the shape of the vase itself (fig. 9). The repetition of the form of the vase in the crown is not uncommon. By providing a summary of the whole, it completes the vase in a satisfactory way.

The crowning miniature of the Raleigh vase seems to have had a white background. There is a band of pink on the foot. The frieze has a band of gold. The underface of the cornice is dark blue, probably with pink over. The leaves at the bases of the handles are gold (recalling those below the main part of the vase), and there may once have been gold on the ribs of the handles and the knobs. The faces of the handles are pink. The topmost knob seems to have traces of gold.

The main element of the painted decoration is a

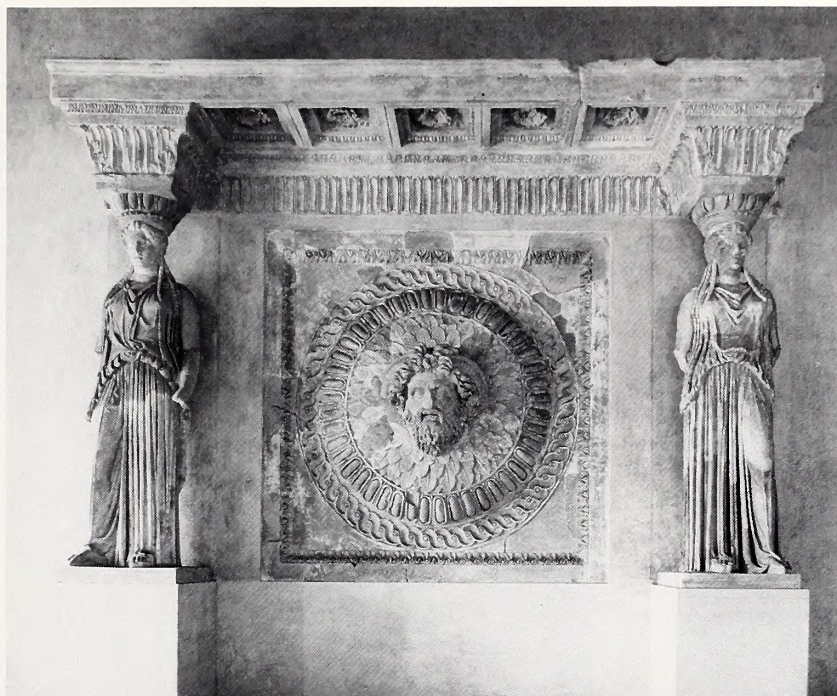


Fig. 8
Detail of the attic level in the Forum
of Augustus, Rome.



Fig. 9
The knob of the funerary vase, North
Carolina Museum of Art.

female head between wings. The face is flesh colored, the lips red, the other details black, but with white on the eyelids. The wings have a gold leading edge, then black, with white for the pinion feathers. The face is well drawn, and the shading under the eyebrows, nose, lips, and chin gives a fine sense of modeling.

The head-between-wings motif occurs very often in southern Italian vase painting of the second half of the fourth century B.C., but in the fourth-century examples, we are never quite sure if the head represents an androgynous Eros or a Nike. Here, the head looks decidedly more female, so we think of a Nike. Although Nike is commonly taken as a personification of Victory, her character was more complex in ancient iconography and thought. In his *Theogony*, Hesiod mentions Nike as the daughter of Styx, and representations of her occur not infrequently in scenes connected with funerals. In the context of this vase painting, however, it is perhaps better to think of Nike as a winged genie. She is frequently shown bringing gifts to the bride of a real wedding, bringing the blessing of the spirits of the underworld. When the context is funereal, she has an even more appropriate part to play.⁵

We have now described everything except what in many ways is the most important part of the vase, the scene on the body (figs. 10a–c). Like the rest of the decoration, it covers one side (the front) only.



Figs. 10a–c

Details of the main scene on the
funerary vase, North Carolina
Museum of Art.

The whole is painted against a pink background. Much of the lower part of the scene has suffered damage.

The composition is made up of five adult women and two smaller figures. It is closed on the left by a floral motif and on the right by a door. The first figure on the left is wrapped in a pale yellow himation, or cloak, over a blue-black chiton. She is turned toward the center, but leans back. Between her and the second woman are two smaller figures. The figure hovering above is an Eros, holding what is probably a garland (the surface is worn). Below, a naked child, probably a girl, holds out her hands toward the woman. She is probably carrying something that has added pink. Although there is an area of incrustation behind her shoulders, she is seemingly not winged. The second woman turns to the right but looks back. She wears a necklace and earrings (painted in yellow, presumably to show them as gold), a wreath of white flowers about her head, and a chiton with a more loosely draped, yellow himation over her left shoulder and lower body. The third or central figure stands frontal and wears a yellow-white cloak that comes over her head like a veil. The main part of her dress is white, and the tie strings on the front of her body are pink. She too

wears a necklace. The fourth woman turns slightly toward the center but looks away to the right. She wears a necklace and earrings, and possibly a wreath of flowers. Her himation is pale green, and she has it drawn up about her. The fifth, rightmost figure carries a *tympanon* (tambourine) in her left hand. She turns away but leans back, her pink chiton slipping from her shoulder. Her himation is yellow and is draped loosely about her arms. The paneled door beyond her is done in shades of brown (it is wooden) with a white surround, lintel, and threshold.

The scene is dominated by the central figure. She is dressed distinctively, and the other figures turn toward her. Her importance is emphasized by small sashes that hang from the upper border to either side of her head, and by her size: she is slightly larger than the other figures. The central figure is the bride, and the girls who immediately flank her are her attendants. They stand close, and we feel, somewhat protectively. The two outer figures are slightly more detached. The one on the left is separated by the smaller figures, the one on the right is turned toward the door. If forced to guess, we might suppose the woman on the left to be the bride's mother, who watches the proceedings closely even though she is not directly involved.



The variety of feelings conveyed by the figures is rarely seen in vase painting: the bride's attendants seem protective, the lefthand figure reserved and uninvolved. The bride herself looks markedly apprehensive: her eyes are wider and her lips slightly parted. That the figure on the right is the most relaxed of the group, is conveyed by her pose and by the way she allows her chiton to fall.

Despite the apparent formality of the arrangement, the painting conveys subtle variation and movement. The smaller figures relieve the solemnity of the scene somewhat: the motif of a child seeking attention at its mother's skirt is used in later treatments of formal occasions. The outward direction of the attendants' gaze draws in the outer figures. More important, there is a sense of movement toward the right. This begins with the figure on the far left, who closes off that side. The two smaller figures are both turned toward the right. Although the bride seems static and frontal, her weight is on her left leg and she leans slightly toward the right. Finally, and most significantly, the rightmost woman with the tambourine moves right and turns back with a gesture of the hand to make the bride accompany her.

Adding to the rightward movement is the direction of light, as seen in the highlighting of the faces.

The door is the farthest point from the source of light. The figures are all moving toward the door; the painting conveys a moment's pause before they enter it.

In the ancient world, the iconography of wedding scenes and of funeral scenes was remarkably similar. Since birth was not much celebrated, marriage and death were the two major events in a woman's career, both marking a move to a different life. Studies of modern rural Greece show that even today, traditional laments at funerals echo the themes of songs sung at weddings, some of which are laments for the bride's leaving her prenuptial home.⁶ In representations of ancient weddings, both *Nikai* and *Erotes* can appear and bring gifts, and they can both appear at funerals, too. A bride in ancient times was likely to be much more apprehensive than a modern bride, who is normally more familiar with the groom and more likely to be embarking on an independent life with the groom, rather than a life with his family. We see reflections of the apprehension of the bride in art, and we read of it in literature. The nuptial agreement did not involve the bride, but was made between the groom and her father or guardian. In art, the motif of the actual wedding usually involves the man's putting his hand on the girl's wrist to lead her away, a very obvious sign of possession and dominance. A bride was taken from the care of one house to the care of another. So, too, at her death she passed from the house of her earthly guardian to the house of Hades. The door is a symbol of this concept, the house of her groom or of Hades.⁷

The Raleigh vase exhibits all the elements of wedding/funeral iconography: *Nikai*, *Erotes*, apprehension, the protectiveness of friends, the door. The central figure pauses for a last glimpse of the mortal world before entering the world beyond the door. The most carefree figure in the scene is the girl with the tambourine, a sign that she belongs to the retinue of Dionysos and the blessed. She is of that other world, and her function is to lead the central figure on her way. The painter has depicted all this outstandingly well. As so often in Greek painting, the figures themselves tell the story. But for the door, there is no landscape; the context is implied by the actions and attributes of the figures.

Given the quality of the work, it is reasonable to suppose that we have here a good example of contemporary free painting. The technique is predominantly linear, especially in the clothes and the outlines of the arms and legs. The color wash is applied over and within these lines in a traditional way. On

the other hand, the use of light and shade for the faces and to some degree for the arms of the figures is quite sophisticated. The painter uses light and shade to suggest roundness and three-dimensionality successfully, thus breaking away from the linear technique that we expect in free painting. The more Italic, less Greek, aspects of the work are the dominant position of the bride in the composition and her slightly larger size. They serve to remind us of the geographical and historical situation in which the vase was made. The architectural treatment of the decoration reflects a distinctively southern Italian treatment of Greek ideas. Similarly, in the painting, the artist exploits known techniques to serve his own purposes. On the whole, the funerary vase in the North Carolina Museum of Art is a remarkable testament to what Centuripan craftsmen could achieve.

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Notes

1. For studies of Centuripan pottery, see G. Libertini, *Centuripe* (Catania, 1926); G. Libertini, *Atti e Memorie della Società M. Grecia* (1932), 187–212; G. Libertini, *Notizie degli Scavi* (1947), 259–311, esp. 278ff.; G. M. A. Richter, "Polychrome Vases from Centuripe in the Metropolitan Museum," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* 2 (1930): 187–205; G. M. A. Richter, "Polychrome Vases from Centuripe in the Metropolitan Museum," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* 4 (1932): 45–54; A. D. Trendall, "A New Polychrome Vase from Centuripe," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 13 (1955): 161–66; U. Wintermeyer, "Die polychrome Reliefkeramik aus Centuripe," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 90 (1975): 136–241.
2. The funerary vase is also illustrated in Edgar Peters Bowron, ed., *The North Carolina Museum of Art: Introduction to the Collections* (Raleigh, 1983). Its accession number is 75.1.9.
3. On the acanthus leaves and similar reliefwork: H. U. von Schoenebeck, *Mnemosyne Theodor Wiegand* (Munich, 1938), 54–73; P. Wuillemier, *Le Trésor de Tarente* (Paris, 1930); S. I. Rotroff, *Hellenistic Pottery: Athenian and Imported Moldmade Bowls*, vol. 22 of *The Athenian Agora* (Princeton, 1982); W. Zuchner, "Von Toreuten und Töpfern," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 65–66 (1950–51): 175–205; K. Parlasca, "Das Verhältnis der megarischen Becher zum alexandrinischen Kunsthandwerk," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 70 (1955): 129–54; H. C. A. Kühmann, "Beiträge zur hellenistisch-römischen Toreutik," *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz* 5 (1958): 94–138; H. C. A. Kühmann, "Untersuchungen zur Toreutik des zweiten und ersten Jahrhunderts vor Christus," (Inaugural diss., Kallmünz, 1959); L. Byvanck-Quarles van Ufford, *Bulletin . . . Antieke Beschaving* 33 (1958): 43–52; J. W. Salomonson, "Der hellenistische Töpfer als Toreut," *Bulletin . . . Antieke Beschaving* 57 (1982): 164–75.
4. On *telamones*, see F. Schaller-Harl, *Stützfiguren in der griechischen Kunst* (Vienna, 1973); E. Schmidt, *Geschichte der Karyatid* (Würzburg, 1982). Note also V. Scrinari, "Le terrecotte architettoniche del Museo archeologico di Aquileia," *Aquileia Nostra* 24–25 (1953–54): 44–51.
5. On winged figures, marriage and death, Dionysiac elements, etc., see H. Kenner, "Flügel-frau-und Flugeldämon," *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 31 (1939): 81–95; E. H. Haight, *The Symbolism of the Door in Classical Poetry* (New York, 1950); M. P. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age* (Lund, 1957); S. Rutherford Roberts, *The Attic Pyxis* (Chicago, 1978), 182–84; I. Jenkins, "Is There Life after Marriage? A Study of the Abduction Motifs in Vase Paintings of the Athenian Wedding Ceremony," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 30 (1983): 137–45; I. S. Mark, "The Gods on the East Frieze of the Parthenon," *Hesperia* 53 (1984): 309–12.
6. On modern parallels, see M. Alexiou and P. Dronke, *Studi Medaievali* (Spoleto) 12, 2 (1971): 819–63; L. M. Darnforth, *The Death Rituals of Rural Greece* (Princeton, 1982), chap. 4.
7. For a different view—that these scenes show actual wedding ceremonies—see P. Deussen, "The Nuptial Themes of Centuripe Vases," *Opuscula Romana* 9 (1973): 125–33, but he finds it difficult to explain the absence of the groom and the use of instruments such as the tambourine or the cymbals (which appear in some scenes).

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